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East edition No 727

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Be safe at the seaside by respecting sea's powers

SCHOOL holidays and superb summer weather have seen many of us heading for some of the beautiful beaches our county is blessed with.

Be it a day trip or a week or two, a visit to the seaside is on every kid's agenda once the summer holidays begin.

It's seen as a place to have fun and go a little wild, and the air around all beaches is filled with shouts, laughter and shrieks as youngsters splash and crash around in, on and near the sea.

But events at beaches around the country this summer have seen the shouts and shrieks of joy turned into shouts and shrieks of anguish.

The more than a dozen tragic deaths are a reminder of the power of the sea and our innate ability to deliberately forget the power of Mother Nature.

We all know the power of the sea: We've all stood with just our feet in the water and felt ourselves being moved forwards and backwards by the waves. Anyone who has ever taken a dip in the sea will have at one time or another been pushed under by the waves or found themselves tossed on to the beach like a rag doll.

The sea is not at fault, we are. We have forgotten to respect it.

There will, unfortunately, continue to be tragic accidents. The unpredictable nature of the sea means inevitably and sadly some people will be caught out.

But for those who don't respect the waves and the tides, all the lifeguards in the world won't help them.

We are an island nation, the sea plays a huge part in our national identity and yet we seem to think it's a summer plaything, a benign creature there for our amusement.

Let us hope the events of recent weeks will bring things back into balance and that everyone will enjoy their seaside trips but be wary of the tides and the waves.

Enjoy your bank holiday weekend and, above all, take care.

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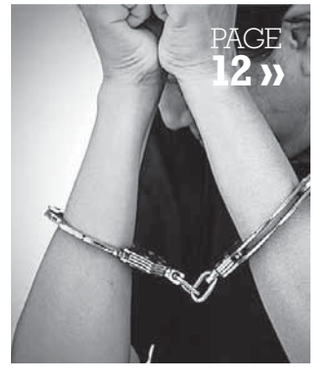

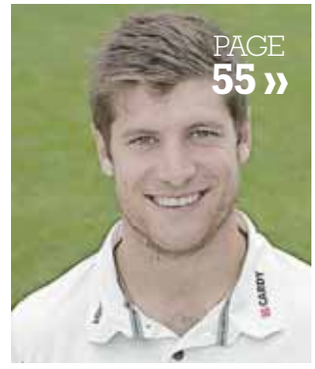

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

‘Lifeguards could have saved my brother’s life’

By Tom Pugh
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

TRAGIC: Nitharsan Ravi, who went to Bexleyheath Academy, died in nearby Sussex

THE younger brother of the former Bexleyheath Academy student who tragically died off the East Sussex coast earlier this week has slammed authorities for not having a lifeguard on duty.

Nitharsan Ravi, 22, has been named locally as one of the five men who lost their lives at Camber Sands, alongside Inthushan Sri, 23, Kurushanth Srithavarajah, 26, and brothers Kobi Nathan, 21, and Ken, 19.

It is believed the group of friends were on a day-trip from London.

According to his Facebook page, Mr Ravi attended the Bexleyheath Academy before going on to study at the University of Brighton.

Mr Ravi’s younger brother, Ajirthan, 19, said his sibling died after trying to rescue two of his friends who had become trapped beneath the water.

“Ken and Inthushan got stuck in water,” he said.

“So what they do is the three boys try to save them.”

He said attempts failed and Mr Srithavarajah was brought out first and declared dead straight away.

“My bro and Kobi had heartbeats and managed to survive for a few minutes but after first aid they couldn’t recover,” he added, claiming both died within 15 minutes after being pulled from the water.

“There wasn’t any lifeguards cruising around, because they would have quickly noticed these boys drowning, and could have at least saved their lives.”

Mr Ravi’s family said they felt “very angry” at the lack of response from the authorities following the death of another man, Brazilian Gustavo Silva Da Cruz, 19, at Camber last month.

The father of Erith brothers Ken and Kobi Nathan also voiced criticism, saying if there were lifeguards on the beach his sons may have survived.

Satthiyanathan Arumukam, 51, told The Sun: “I brought my children from Sri Lanka because it is not safe back there.

“But there were no lifeguards on the beach where they died. If there had been, my sons would have at least had a fighting chance of survival.”

Council officials say temporary lifeguards will be deployed this bank holiday weekend at Camber Sands, near Rye, to “reassure the public and advise on safety”.

Police urge authorities to hand over suspects of Ayia Napa stabbing

POLICE in Cyprus have asked authorities in the breakaway Turkish Cypriot north to hand over two suspects in the killing of a Dartford man and the serious wounding of another Briton in the island’s coastal resort of Ayia Napa.

George Low, 22, was stabbed to death earlier this month after a scuffle, in an attack that his family said had left them “numb”.

Turkish Cypriot official Hakki Celal Onen told The Associated Press the request would be considered after the two suspects, Mehmet Akpinar, 22, and Sali Ahmet, 42, have been tried in a Turkish Cypriot military court on charges of trespassing into a military area.

The trespassing charges stem from the two men allegedly crossing into the north at least twice from areas other than the seven checkpoints that regulate pedestrian and vehicular traffic through the 120-mile United Nations-controlled buffer zone that cuts across the island.

Cyprus police said the two suspects are believed to have fled to the north and out of their reach shortly after the attack on August 14.

Akpinar’s 48-year-old Greek Cypriot girlfriend told police during questioning that Akpinar admitted to her that he and Ahmet committed the stabbings after scolding the two Britons for urinating in public.

Cyprus police are treating the stabbings as premeditated and attempted murder.

Cyprus has been divided along ethnic lines since a 1974 Turkish invasion in the wake of a coup aiming at union with Greece. Authorities in the internationally recognised Greek Cypriot south do not recognise and have no control over the north and cannot make arrests there.

According to local sources, Akpinar is a Turkish national and Ahmet is believed to be a Bulgarian national.

Six men quizzed after being rescued from Channel boat

HALF a dozen suspected migrants were found in a small boat in the English Channel on Thursday.

Coastguards were alerted to the vessel off the Kent coast at around 5.40am before scrambling the Lydd-based search and rescue helicopter and the Border Force cutter, HMC Valiant.

A Home Office spokesman said: ‘‘Six men were recovered from the boat and are due to be interviewed by Border Force officers.’’

Meanwhile, Kent Police shot down claims by the right-wing EDL Coastal Patrol that it is working alongside the force to ‘‘protect our shores’’.

‘‘We only work with partners such as the Border Force, Coastguard and RNLI when it comes to policing our coastline,’’ police said.

Dealer jailed after cocaine worth £200k found in car

A DEALER caught with two kilos of cocaine in his car whilst driving along the A249 near Sittingbourne has been jailed.

Nicholas Bubb, 26, of Esparto Way, South Darenth, admitted he intending to sell on the class-a drug, worth around £200,000 after being stopped by police at around 3pm on June 23.

Inside his car, officers found the cocaine, wrapped inside a bag with ‘Amsterdam’ written on it as well as mobile phones, scales and tick lists containing names and numbers at his address.

He was jailed for four years when he appeared in court on Tuesday.

‘‘I’m pleased he has been handed a suitable prison sentence,’’ a detective said.

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seven days

Stories which made the headlines @kentnews.co.uk during the past week

County baker rises to top on BBC programme

BECKENHAM'S baking star Jane Beedle was the first contestant to win the title of Star Baker as the Great British Bake Off returned to our screens on Wednesday.

The 61-year-old beat stiff competition for the opening cake-themed week, to receive praise from judges Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry.

When not in the kitchen, the mother-of-two designs gardens for a living, but her passion for baking comes from her grandfather who owned a bakery in Hastings.

Erith's Rav also walked through to the next round.

Lee was the first competitor to be sent home, after three disappointing cakes failed to wow the judges.

Both Jane and Rav will be appearing in next week's episode.

Ukip donor accuses MP of helping Conservatives defeat Farage in election

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

A SENIOR Ukip figure has accused the party's only MP of conspiring with the Conservatives to ensure Nigel Farage lost the battle for South Thanet in last year's general election.

A company belonging to Arron Banks, Ukip's biggest donor, has written to Kent Police alleging that Douglas Carswell helped the Tory campaign, ultimately won by Craig Mackinlay, in 2015.

Precision Risk & Intelligence claims that Mr Carswell downloaded Ukip polling data for the South Thanet seat and passed it to the Conservatives, who allegedly used it during the campaign.

The letter sent to Kent Police says: "We have evidence of excessive spending by the Conservatives and secretive dealings between them and a senior Ukip representative to collude against Mr Farage."

Mr Carswell was unavailable for comment but responding to the Guardian, he said: "There is no basis in these claims whatsoever.

"We should just be relieved that those responsible for the disastrous campaign in South Thanet were not responsible for the successful referendum campaign."

LEADER: Nigel Farage in Thanet

A police spokesperson said: "Kent Police received a letter on August 23 regarding our on-going investigation into election spending.

"The letter will be passed to the investigators for their consideration."

The force is also currently investigating claims that Conservatives breached spending laws in South Thanet last year.

A probe was launched by the Electoral Commission off the back of allegations made by Channel 4 that reported spending on the Royal Harbour Hotel in Ramsgate and Premier Inn in Margate was not national campaign spending and therefore should not have been included in the party's expenses return.

It has the power to impose a fine of up to £20,000 if it feels a breach was made.

The Conservatives, and Mr Mackinlay, have long denied any wrongdoing, claiming all spending was correctly recorded in accordance with the law.

COMMENDED: No 31 in Thanet

Aladdin's Cave named third best beach hut

AN EAST Kent beach hut has been highly commended as one of the top three in Britain.

No 31, in West Bay, near Westgate-on-Sea, is owned by Lili Sanchez, and has been described as 'Aladdin's cave', due to its brimming walls filled with kitsch collectibles.

The hut even hosts Ms Sanchez' annual Christmas party for her family.

Two huts in the competition received highly commended status, with No 31 being accompanied by Buggleskelly in East Sussex, both losing out to this year's winner – My Happy Hut in Dovercourt, Essex.

The judging panel included Phil Spencer, co-presenter of popular daytime programme Location, Location, Location, historian and author Dr. Kathryn Ferry, beach hut designer Pete Samson, journalist Charlotte Vowden and last year's winner Jane Ashmore.

Towergate Insurance's competition received entries from across the country each vying to be crowned winner and Mr Spencer said: "There were some exceptional entries this year and the judges were spoilt for choice.

"No 31 really stood out for its intriguing interior, and sentimental value to Lili, her loved ones, and beach hut community. Congratulations Lili."

Almost 250,000 visit unique ship display

AN EXHIBITION of unique photographs and artefacts of the world's most famous ship came to a close on Sunday after attracting well over 200,000 visitors.

The Titanic exhibition was held at Royal Victoria Place shopping centre in Tunbridge Wells between July 23 and August 21 and was only its second opening in the UK and its first in Kent.

It has now packed up and set sail to tour South America and the US after appealing to visitors of all ages from across the county and beyond.

During its opening weekend 'Titanic In Photographs' attracted nearly 16,000 visitors and throughout its four week stay at RVP, a total of over 232,000 visitors came to see the exhibition with some days seeing up to an 11 per cent year-on-year increase in daily footfall.

Marc Burchett, marketing manager, said: ''The feedback we have received from visitors has been amazing with many commenting that they found it to be both fascinating and very emotive.''

Temperatures hit 34 as heatwave peaks

GRAVESEND was home to the highest temperature of the year in the UK on Wednesday as a heatwave hit Kent this week.

Temperatures hit 33.9C in the north of the county, topping the 33.5C recorded in Oxfordshire on July 19.

With more people flocking to beaches as the heat increases, the RNLI has urged visitors to take care and respect the water, particularly after five people died at nearby Camber Sands in Sussex.

Helicopters from Lydd and rescue teams from Dungeness attended the scene.

An RNLI spokeswoman said: ''The sea may look appealing, and the RNLI would encourage people to use it, but do so safely – it can be dangerously unpredictable.

''Please visit lifeguarded beaches and swim between the red and yellow flags - the safe swim zone and the area watched by lifeguards.

''Lifeguards are happy to answer any questions, including where any rip currents may be, which can catch out even the most experienced swimmers.''

Teens to face trial for brutal street murder

A JUDGE has set a trial date for four young men accused of murdering a teenager in south London.

Andre Aderemi, 19, from Chatham, was ''brutally stabbed several times,'' in Heather Way, South Croydon, according to witnesses last Tuesday before dying in hospital.

Jamall Longergan, Fabio Cela and Rodney Mukasa, all 19, appeared at the Old Bailey on Tuesday over the killing.

Judge Michael Topolski set a provisional trial date of February 13, 2017 with a plea hearing on November 8.

Cela and Mukasa, of Croydon, and Longergan, of Thornton Heath, south London, spoke only to confirm their names.

No application for bail was made and they were remanded in custody.

A fourth teenager, Ali Zahawy, 18, is expected to appear before the same court later this week.

Mr Aderemi's sister, Sheniqua, said her brother had ''a priceless heart''.

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Nine months of chaos finally over as rail line set to re-open

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

COMMUTERS in the south of the county have faced travel chaos in recent months but the disruption comes to a close in two weeks as a crucial line on the rails re-opens ahead of schedule.

Engineers at Network Rail initially feared the line between Dover and Folkestone would be out of action for a year after it closed on Christmas Eve following extensive damage to the sea wall at Shakespeare beach.

Since then, a nine-month £40m project has got underway to build a new 235-metre-long viaduct supported by more than 130 concrete columns to ensure passengers from Dover, Deal, Walmer, Sandwich and Martin Mill will soon be able to use a full train service again from Monday, September 5.

Throughout the duration of the work at Dover, a new timetable was put in place with a day and night bus service running to ensure passengers could keep moving.

Passengers who use the line between Dover and Folkestone were also offered a compensation package along with free car parking permits at Folkestone West whilst the line was closed.

While the railway has been closed between Dover and Folkestone, Network Rail has invested an additional £3.5m to make the line more resilient.

BREAKTHROUGH: The line between Folkestone and Dover

The work has included brickwork repairs on Shakespeare, Abbotscliffe and Martello tunnels, 2.4km of new track, and drainage work in Abbotscliffe tunnel.

Network Rail chief executive Mark Carne, said: "This project is a huge achievement for all involved and I'm extremely proud of what has been done by those who have been working on the project since December.

"Finishing this project three months ahead of schedule is a reflection of the continuous hard work that has been taking place here, setting the standard expected at Network Rail.

"We face some big challenges in the coming years but with the skills and the dedication on show here at Dover I know we will face them head on."

However, there is still follow-up work to complete on September 11, October 2 and October 9 to ensure a smooth delivery.

Unidentified bodies date back 45 years

MORE than two dozen unidentified dead bodies, some of which date back almost half a century, are on the books of Kent Police.

The oldest case is the remains of a male believed to be aged between 30 and 50 found washed ashore at Lydd-on-Sea back in 1971.

The most recent, meanwhile, was the discovery of a male body aged between 40 and 60 in the water off Ramsgate Harbour in September 2013.

Inferno rips through car body workshop

EXTENSIVE damage has been caused to a car body workshop in Broadstairs following a fire at Copperleaf Business Park.

Up to 30 per cent of the unit is believed to have been destroyed in the fire, while the remainder suffered heat and smoke damage. Adjacent units suffered light smoke damage.

'A dream come true'

A FOOTBALL-MAD youngster has said it was "a dream come true" to lead out his favourite team at Wembley Stadium earlier this month.

Max Knight,8, from Ashford, stepped out in front of 80,000 fans alongside Manchester United's Antonio Valencia before the FA Cup winners triumphed over Premier League champions Leicester to lift the Community Shield.

Campaign urges chancellor to set up monitoring body

A CRANBROOK-BASED campaign fighting for lower petrol and diesel prices is calling on Theresa May's new chancellor to set up a monitoring body for fairer and more transparent pricing at the pumps.

FairFuelUK is widely credited with stopping more than £57 billion of fuel duty being levied on businesses and the public since 2011, and bosses have now written to Philip Hammond, asking him to go further and be bolder than his predecessor at No 11, George Osborne.

A letter was delivered by hand to the Treasury and the prime minister's office this week, in which the campaign asks to cut duty on all fuels by 3p, slash VAT to 15 per cent, introduce more incentives for motorists to move to cleaner fuels and to set up an 'OfPump' monitoring body to halt the fluctuating fuel prices experienced by drivers every day.

Howard Cox, founder of the FairFuelUK campaign, said: "It's time for the government to truly deliver on the PM's laudable intentions and help millions of hard working families, small businesses and the haulage industry to prosper."

Staggering stats behind historic market revamp

AFTER more than 620 cups of tea, 17,000 roof tiles and 34,000 copper nails, Gravesend's historic market is almost ready for business.

With less than 100 days to go until the market reopens, Gravesham Borough Council has revealed some of the figures behind the £1.8million refurbishment project.

Set to reopen on November 19, the market, which closed last summer, has existed in the town since 1268.

The project is currently in its sixth month, and has seen more than 50 workers and staff on site, working a combined total of 6,485 hours from January to July.

Early plans for the indoor marketEarly plans for the indoor market

Among the features in the new-look market is a glass ceiling made from 96 sheets of glass weighing a combined total of more than 7.2 tonnes.

Cabinet member for business delivery, Samir Jassal praised the market's potential impact.

"The work to the market is really moving forward quickly. These stats are a bit of fun but it does highlight how much work has been done so far and just how big this project is for the town.

"The market will bring a significant improvement to the town centre and having had lots of memories sent through from various people from over the years who enjoyed the old market, it's hoped this one will have the same effect on stall holders and visitors."

Fracas ends in stabbing

A SCUFFLE involving up to 30 people in Dartford ended with a man being stabbed in the back.

A 25-year-old man was taken to a local hospital and discharged later the same day after receiving serious but non-life threatening injuries on Saturday.

Jones turns up the heat

UKIP leadership hopeful Liz Jones stepped up her bid to replace Nigel Farage by setting out her plans for the party this week.

The Dartford family lawyer is something of an outsider in the race to become leader, with south east MEP and former Rochester schoolgirl Diane James looking the favourite.

Further strikes on rails

WORKERS at Southern Rail are set to take another two days of strike action following an ongoing dispute with the company over the changing roles of guards on trains.

The rail workers' union RMT has organised strikes for Wednesday, September 7 and Thursday, September 8.

Trial in youth jail scandal

A MAIDSTONE woman is to stand trial after being charged with common assault following an undercover BBC Panorama investigation into Medway Secure Training Centre in Rochester.

Rebecca Harold, 24, will appear at Medway Magistrates' Court on October 26.

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Grass maintenance could suffer after cuts

2. Latest Dover convictions

Six men jailed following violent protest

3. 'The bald' arrested

Wanted Chinese national in custody

The Essential Guide:

...to London Paramount

Everything you need to know about proposals for a theme park in north Kent

FEATURED PHOTO GALLERY: Take a look and see how restoration work is progressing at Gravesend's historic indoor market, which is set to open in less than 100 days, just in time for Christmas.

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Top Three Blogs

1. Dangers of the dice

Tales from the highs and lows of betting

2. Time to ignore Daesh?

Should we ignore extremists' online videos?

3. Show them the door

There's no excuse for poor door etiquette

Results of the *KoS* Online Poll

Do we need more life-guards on our beaches?

1. Yes, all summer round - 50%
2. Yes, but only for a few weeks - 25%
3. No, it's our responsibility - 0%
4. Don't know - 25%

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New ways to tackle radicalisation

One of the county's biggest mosques – based in Gillingham – has thrown its support behind new government select committee recommendations to reshape how communities tackle radicalisation

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

ONE of Kent's biggest mosques has supported recommendations by a government select committee to reshape the way communities tackle radicalisation.

Only this month, Welling-born preacher Anjem Choudary was convicted of encouraging support for terrorists following a trial at the Old Bailey.

The 49-year-old is believed to have been a recruiter and radicaliser for years but managed to avoid being arrested despite widespread knowledge of his influence on terrorists.

The Prevent strategy was launched in 2007 as the preventative strand of the government's counter-terrorism strategy, Contest.

In 2011 the agenda was relaunched to respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and aspects of extremism, provide practical help to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure they are given appropriate advice and support.

However, a Home Affairs Committee report published this week revealed significant concerns about Prevent and the way it is enforced among communities.

MPs said that the Prevent strategy must be reviewed to produce a new and different inclusive approach that is much more transparent — and it should be renamed Engage, to attempt to remove its already "toxic" associations in the Muslim community.

Allaying these concerns and building trust will require full and wide engagement with all sections of the Muslim community, including at grassroots level — and not just with groups which already agree with the government, they said.

The suggestions were backed by Anwar Khan, of the Kent Muslim Welfare Association, based at Gillingham Mosque, who agreed a change in approach was needed.

"We have had concerns in the past, there was one young man who was raising some suspicion," he told KoS.

"The problem starts with someone doing something differently or not attending the mosque or their school like they used to.

"So we always keep an eye out and the key is of course to try and address it as early as possible and we encourage others to keep a look out and talk with us.

"In that instance after we did, everything was okay.

"But I resisted Prevent when it first came in because the attitude was that it was looking for Muslims who will spy on the households of other Muslims.

"The whole approach was wrong and I resisted the police too, though once we started working together I found they were fantastic, but there needs to be more mutual consultation."

RECRUITER: Radical preacher Anjem Choudary

MPs also demanded the government facilitate regular meetings of the leaders of the UK's Muslim communities, claiming "these steps can contribute to an effective counter-narrative".

The support made available to families of individuals who travel abroad to join terrorist organisations was described as "lamentable" and the committee said there needs to be an easily accessible advice and counselling service, particularly for parents, who wish to raise concerns and ask for help when worried about their loved ones being radicalised.

"As a minimum, the government must change the name of the 'anti-terrorist helpline' which can be seen as too stigmatising and makes people apprehensive about expressing their worries," MPs said.

Communities themselves were also called on to take a leadership role in tackling the issue head-on, with the committee suggesting the Muslim Council of Britain could do more to expose and remove those who preach or advocate race hate and intolerance, and particularly those who draw young people into extremism.

Mr Khan added: "I think we do lead, we work closely with the police and the council and we are proactive in keeping an eye on people.

"We have written a comprehensive letter to the education secretary and are constantly trying to raise awareness not just amongst Muslims but all faiths."

Kent County Council appears to also be preparing to work on a revamped scheme, after the report found that support from local authorities, Prevent coordinators and the police was inconsistent.

KCC chiefs were coy on specific details at this early stage but a spokesman told KoS this week: "As the lead authority on the government's Prevent programme in the county, KCC has been co-ordinating work with district councils and other public bodies and partners on developing a strategy in line with the government's objectives.

"The county has been selected to participate in a new Home Office pilot initiative and a funding bid has been submitted to supplement the team in preparation for that.

"Details of that initiative and the ongoing countywide strategy will be announced in the near future."

The report also recommends that the Metropolitan Police's Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) should be upgraded into a high-tech, state-of-the-art, round-the-clock, central 'Operational Hub' which locates the perils early, moves quickly to block them and is able to instantly share the sensitive information with other security agencies.

Quizzed on the possibility of Kent Police also being upgraded in terms of resources and responsibility to combat terrorism, the force told KoS it would be too soon to pass comment on mere suggestions.

A spokesperson said: "Kent Police works with local authorities, schools, education establishments and national bodies to both identify cases of potential radicalisation, and reduce the risk of it happening.

"Kent Police recently worked with the University of Kent to design a piece of software that simulates a social media website.

"The software can be used by teachers in the classroom to help educate pupils on extremism, radicalisation and internet safety.

"The public can also play their part in keeping the country safe from terrorism by being aware of signs of radicalisation, and reporting any concerns to the police."

The software referenced is 'Zak' – a social media style simulation set up by the university in 2013, enabling young people to protect themselves and their peers against online grooming and radicalisation.

As they follow Zak's posts and messages, and become immersed in the social media activities, they learn to analyse to spot early signs of grooming.

Detailed answers and links to research in the comprehensive training pack provide background, insight and ongoing support.

The software has proved a huge success and has been rolled out in a number of schools across the county over the last three years.

Gillingham and Rainham MP Rehman Chishti, a Muslim himself, was presented with a gong at the Asian Voice Political and Public Life Awards back in March after leading a campaign which successfully convinced the government to officially adopt the term 'Daesh' when referring to the terrorist group widely referred to as "the so-called Islamic State".

It was supported by 170 MPs from across the political spectrum and this week's report also highlighted a responsibility of the media to also refer to the group as Daesh in future reporting.

Mr Chishti was contacted for comment by KoS but was unavailable.

As migrant numbers rise fears grow over human trafficking

As the gateway to Europe, our county is no stranger to the efforts of migrants to gain entry illegally but there is concern some may be suffering slavery, sexual exploitation or domestic servitude...

By Adele Couchman
adele.couchman@archant.co.uk

ON THE RISE: The Salvation Army announced this week it had seen nearly a fivefold increase in slavery victims in England and Wales since 2012

THERE is still "a huge problem" in recognising victims of human trafficking, an academic has warned, after more were found in Kent last year than nearly everywhere else in the UK.

Some 88 potential victims were forwarded on to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) last year, a process set up by the government to identify and support those who have been trafficked in Britain.

Kent was ranked eighth for the highest number of suspected human trafficking victims out of a total of 45 police force areas according to the National Crime Agency (NCA).

The grim statistics come as The Salvation Army announced earlier this week it has seen nearly a fivefold increase of slavery victims it has helped in England and Wales since 2012.

The charity said more than 1,800 people were given support between April 2015 and March 2016, up from 378 between July 2011 and June 2012 – its first year of operating the government contract to support victims.

Almost half had been sexually exploited, 42 per cent were subject to forced labour and a further 13 per cent were victims of domestic servitude.

Unsurprisingly, the problem in Kent has been linked with the county's migrant crisis – with Dover MP Charlie Elphicke earlier this week calling for stronger borders to stop the influx of people who could be trafficked from the Calais Jungle.

University of Kent PHD student Elena Krsmanovic has expressed similar worries about the vulnerability of refugees and asylum seekers after witnessing migrants arriving in Serbia whilst working for a anti-trafficking charity.

"Of course people travelling through dangerous routes trying to get to countries are under much greater risk," she told KoS.

"Whilst they are travelling, many who are desperate to escape their origins will have to pay off debts to their smugglers.

"They're not in a position to say no to work; no matter how dehumanising it might be.

"When they've reached their destination, there have been many cases of people working in the illegal sector until they get asylum.

"When someone doesn't have proper documentation it leaves them much more likely to be exploited underhand."

After helping survivors for the Serbian charity ASTRA, the 27-year-old criminology researcher is keen that people understand what trafficking involves so victims can be identified and receive the support they need.

"There's a huge problem with people not having the capacity to recognise victims, so there may be many out there who could be missed and not taken care of," she said.

"Cases are not always sexual and violent like the media makes out - someone could still be suffering without cuts and bruises."

Earlier in June, a judge ruled in favour of six Lithuanian migrants who said they had been trafficked as chicken catchers for a Maidstone firm.

Speaking of their ordeal, the men said they had been forced to work in inhuman and degrading conditions and threatened by supervisors with fighting dogs.

For many migrants, the future lies in not only brothels but also car washes and fruit fields to enable them to pay off their debts for what they believed would be a better life.

With more than 1,000 unaccompanied child refugees arriving on our shores last year, Kent County Council (KCC) says it is very mindful about the possibility of trafficking and ensure checks are in place but concedes activity at Dover is what may be pushing up the figures.

"It is KCC's legal responsibility to care for under-18s who arrive in the county from abroad, seeking asylum.

"As a matter of course, when new arrivals come into the care of KCC, we refer those Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children that have been identified at particular risk of being trafficked to the NCA.

"This could include certain countries of origin, such as Vietnam, stories that are suspicious, or if they are in receipt of large sums of money.

"Because of the high number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children coming into the county through Dover, this will inevitably make the figure for Kent higher, but does not necessarily mean they have been trafficked.

"We work closely with the Home Office and the police to disrupt trafficking activity and to protect and safeguard any individuals who are deemed to be at risk."

A Kent Police spokesperson added: "We have made significant advances in educating and training officers and staff to look out for the warning signs of human trafficking and modern slavery and that, coupled with the county's geographical position as the gateway to Europe, are the key reasons why we see more potential victims than other forces.

"Kent Police is also in the process of developing a new training course that focuses on safeguarding, investigation and prosecution for senior investigating officers and it is hoped that this will be jointly delivered by the CPS and result in an increasing amount of successful convictions for offences covered by the new Modern Slavery Act 2015.

"An assistant chief constable from the force also chairs a newly-created Kent Anti-Slavery Partnership which brings together the various partner agencies and charitable organisations in order that victims can be protected and offenders prosecuted."

JUNCKER 'HOPELESSLY OUT OF TOUCH,' CLAIMS DOVER MP

THE president of the European Commission has been slammed as "hopelessly out of touch" by a Kent MP.

It comes in a row over national borders, such as the Le Touquet agreement between England and France, which Brussels' top official Jean-Claude Juncker described as "the worst invention ever".

However, Dover MP Charlie Elphicke has rubbished the European chief's claims, and insisted the border between his constituency and Calais across the Channel was fundamental to Britain's security.

He told KoS: "Clearly Mr Juncker is hopelessly out of touch with the concerns of citizens across Europe.

"The Schengen area of free movement doesn't work for anyone, meanwhile the border with Dover and Calais is far stronger and ensures we are maintaining more control than they are on the continent.

"It's welcome to see some improvements made, but more needs to be done.

"We need to have a Dover patrol to keep the Channel secure, we need to have the Jungle [camp housing thousands of migrants in Calais] dismantled and we need to clamp down on traffickers."

Sources close to Theresa May, who last month met with French President Francois Hollande and announced that the Le Touquet agreement would remain despite Brexit, also said Mr Juncker's comments were "not something that the prime minister would agree with."

Her official spokesperson added: "You have heard the Prime Minister talk about the views that the British people expressed in the referendum.

"The British people think that borders are important, having more control over our borders is important, and that is an issue we need to address."

Security has certainly been stepped up since last summer, when hundreds of migrants stormed the Channel Tunnel, causing disruption to services and leading to delays and cancellations.

However, a Home Affairs Select Committee report last month said the number of Border Force vessels in operation was "worryingly low" and recommended the use of Royal Navy vessels to make up for the shortfall.

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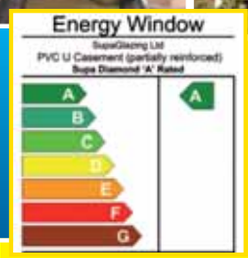

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THUMB'S UP: It was all smiles for these pupils at Tonbridge's Hayesbrook School

The wait is over for the county's GCSE students

Thursday saw apprehensive pupils opening the envelopes of their dreaded exam results letters...

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

KENT'S schools are continuing to perform well despite grades appearing to fall on a nationwide basis.

Girls continue to outperform boys at GCSE, according to results released on Thursday, but figures by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) showed both genders' grades were down on last year.

A*-C grades were achieved by 71.3 per cent of girls this summer compared with 62.4 per cent of boys, however both were down on last year, from 73.1 per cent and 64.7 per cent respectively.

Girls also outperform boys in terms of achieving the very top grades - with 7.9 per cent getting an A*, compared with five per cent although both saw a slight decline.

In the county, however, there was plenty of cause for celebration, with many schools achieving their best ever results.

At Sevenoaks School, 92 per cent of the examinations taken by the 151 candidates were awarded A* or A grades.

Some 59 students – over a third of the year group - gained ten A*s or more each, and 128 students gained 9 or more A* or A grades, while all but twenty eight results out of 1549 examinations were awarded grade B or above.

Head, Dr Katy Ricks, said: "These results are excellent, and a superb achievement for both students and teachers."

Ashford's North School, meanwhile, praised the dedication of staff, the support of parents and the determination of its students after achieving its best ever set of GCSE results.

The North has seen what headteacher Nicki Hodges described as "a huge improvement" in results across the board, praising the "colossal" efforts of staff and "100 per cent buy in" from the current cohort of GCSE students, who more than doubled last year's haul of A* to C grades in English and maths by taking it to 54 per cent.

Similarly, Cobham Hall also celebrated its best ever results, with an A*–C pass rate of 98 per cent, 50 per cent of grades being A* or A and 75 per cent achieving A*-B.

"Cobham Hall is not an academically selective school but we show what can be achieved by hard working pupils and dedicated teachers working in small classes in a positive environment," headmaster Mr Mitchell said.

"They have been ably supported by our superb pastoral staff and the pupils' parents and all thoroughly deserve their success."

The Leigh University Technical College in Dartford also enjoyed success in its first year of results, as principal Steve Leahey explained.

"Excellent progress has been made by students from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as those with special educational needs," he said.

"One of our core aims is to get more girls into engineering and IT, our girls have excelled this year and will be future role models for those choosing STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths] careers.

"Following on from the excellent Post 16 results last week, and the large number of students being employed in jobs within engineering and IT or going to university, we are delighted."

S a H a g

Potential A-levels students from non-selectives may be looking for a Sixth Form place at a grammar school but as former headteacher and education expert **Peter Read** explains, it might not be that easy...

LAST year the two Thanet grammar schools, Dane Court and Chatham & Clarendon, admitted 124 students from non-selective (NS) schools into their Sixth Forms, whilst the two grammars in Folkestone took in just five between them.

Dartford Grammar School recruited 107 new students but just two from NS schools.

King Ethelbert's School saw 48 students transfer to grammar school Sixth Forms, although four other NS schools had no such transfers.

On the surface, an average intake of 16 NS students across the county for the Sixth Forms of the 32 grammar schools looks healthy, and I have always argued that the opportunity for a second chance to join a grammar school, in the Sixth Form, is a necessary criterion for a successful Selective System across the county.

However, this average hides a massive variation, as too many grammar schools focus on recruiting the very top scorers in their chase for league table places.

Alternatives for taking A-levels, the key route to university and many professions, are shrinking with three of the four Further Education colleges now having abandoned courses, focusing on vocational pathways.

However, there are 18 non-selective schools who run Sixth Forms with more than 50 students who took A-levels in 2015, all but one achieving respectable A-level grades.

Largest were: Bennett Memorial (152 students); Hillview Girls (133); Fulston Manor (108); Homewood (103); and St Simon Stock (92).

Compare these with the smallest grammar school, Barton Court, with just 76 A-level students.

The three top scoring NS schools on average point score per A-level entry are in order: Mascalls; Westlands; and Bennett Memorial, all scoring better than five of the grammar schools.

Many of the NS schools offer a mixed menu of A-level and vocational courses to their students allowing them to keep their options open.

One other school that stands out is the non-selective Canterbury Academy, which had the largest Sixth Form in Kent, with 589 students last September.

Astonishingly it had the third largest increase in numbers of any Kent school from Year 11 to Year 12, up by 91, the only NS school in the county to show any increase.

SYSTEM: Expert Peter Read argues a second chance to join a grammar school is vital for a selective system

Most of these students are following its wide range of highly successful vocational courses.

A number of these NS schools are clearly taking in students from others where there may not be the same range of opportunities.

Currently financial pressures on Sixth Forms have seen many others reduce the number of courses on offer, also the reason why three out of four Further Education

Continued on page 16

Continued on page 16

colleges have abandoned A-levels.

One major problem is that Kent, with its wide geographical spread, sees each locality offering a different range of options at post 16.

Under new government legislation all young people are required to stay in learning or training until the age of 18, but this can include full-time study in school or college, part time education or training with work or volunteering, or taking up an apprenticeship or training.

Kent County Council is required to enforce this but has no power to ensure the courses are provided.

So in Thanet, with the East Kent College having abandoned its A-level offering, and just two of the five NS selective schools offering small A-level groups, there is little alternative to the grammar schools for A-level courses, although they have welcomed the opportunity with open arms.

In Dartford, the four grammar schools admit just 28 non-selective students between them, the two Dartford Grammars chasing high grades and the two Wilmingtons having little room to expand.

Perhaps as a result, most of the NS schools have thriving A-level provision. However, Ebbsfleet Academy which has no Sixth Form saw just four students transfer to grammar school, probably in Gravesend.

However, the most interesting district has to be Canterbury, with the two Langton Grammars taking in 43 NS students between them, whilst Barton Court Grammar admitted just four.

Altogether Simon Langton Boys saw the second largest increase in numbers in the country, rising from Year 11, by 92 students to a total of 222 in Year 12.

SUCCESS: Thamesview School's George Broadhurst was one of thousands across the county who enjoyed top grades, but what's next for students like him?

Simon Langton Girls' Grammar School saw its roll slip sharply from 152 in Year 11 last year, to 122 in Year 12, in spite of an influx of 16 girls from non-selective schools.

Barton Court Grammar, also in Canterbury, saw its Year 12 wither to 93 students, from 126 in Year 11, although it only attracted (or wanted?) just four students from NS schools.

It certainly appears that as well as its positive attitude to NS students, there is a considerable transfer of grammar school students to the boys' school, a phenomenon that is repeated in some other towns.

One would assume that the overwhelming majority of children entering grammar school at age 11 would anticipate completing a seven year course to A-level there.

However, this is not always the case, with some remarkable fall out rates including the examples above.

However, the biggest fall was at Folkestone School for Girls, which rightly prides itself on its table topping A-level grades.

It managed to lose an overall 37 students, attracting just four NS girls to compensate. Why and where did so many girls choose to leave the school after their GCSEs?

So what does all this mean for those receiving their GCSE results this week?

For those with a statistical bent, there is plenty of data out there to indicate which the best schools are in terms of academic progress from GCSE to A-level.

But where does everyone else turn for objective advice?

I recall when I was chairman of what was then an Independent Kent Careers Service, we had independent staff based in various centres throughout Kent, and providing advice in each school so able to put flesh on some of the questions I hope this article has posed.

The Careers Service has long since gone, and much of the advice in Kent is now provided by the school itself, theoretically required to be independent, but many schools will always have an interest in guiding the outcome.

■ An expanded version of this article is available on Peter Read's website, visit www.kentadvice.co.uk

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FIGHT: Demonstrators in Ramsgate this week were surprised to see an increased number of police officers in force for the transport of live animals to the port

Police presence slammed as live export protests start to heat up

Campaigners again made their voice heard in Ramsgate ahead of a weekend of rallying against the controversial trade, but was the huge turnout of police officers justified given its limited resources?

By Tom Pyman

CAMPAIGNERS opposed to the live animal export trade from Ramsgate have slammed Kent Police for "wasting" resources after almost one hundred officers helped ease the transportation of sheep to the port this week.

Cuts to the force's budget have been well-documented, and demonstrators in Thanet have argued that its thin resources could be better deployed than policing what they describe as a peaceful protest.

Hundreds of campaigners lined the streets of Ramsgate in an attempt to block lorries transporting some 2,500 sheep to Calais via the port, but the increased police presence made their opposition difficult to enforce.

Former Thanet councillor and leading campaigner Ian Driver told KoS: "There were more police than I have ever seen before – clearly they had changed their tactics and I would estimate there were a hundred there, so it was almost one-to-one between them and us.

"They threw a cordon around the lorries so protesters couldn't get close and halt their progress. As a result they were through quite quickly, unlike before.

"It's strange that the Kent Police budget is under enormous strain and I don't think this is at all where they should be using those resources.

"We are peaceful protesters and we have a democratic right to do so and to have that many officers there was a complete overreaction by Kent Police because nothing has changed in terms of what we do.

"They have told us previously at meetings that each shipment costs around £19,000 to police, but with this presence it must be more like £29,000.

"A lot of the protesters are women and a lot, myself included, are elderly and it's all very peaceful so I don't understand why the force is wasting resources on this when it's made no secret of its tight budget.

"I can only assume some intense pressure from the exporters has motivated this sort of response."

However, Kent Police has defended its response, as a spokesperson for the force told KoS: "Police resources for this type of operation are continually assessed, based on information available to us prior to an event.

"Kent Police responds to every incident appropriately and proportionately in order to facilitate lawful trade, peaceful protest, prevent crime and disorder and ensure public safety."

Mr Driver recently warned of a surge in activity at the port, with exporters looking to take advantage of the weak pound and make a quick profit before Brexit takes effect.

South Thanet MP Craig Mackinlay earlier this year blamed "the big boot of the EU" for blocking Britain's ability to ban the trade, and said leaving the EU would allow greater control.

He also revealed he will again look to present an emergency bill to the Commons, similar to the bid he made earlier in the year, with a second reading expected to take place in the autumn.

The hope is that the bill will become law but it is dependent on Britain withdrawing from the EU.

The drama at the port comes ahead of a weekend of action against the trade, with a Green Party MEP for the south east throwing his weight behind campaign groups.

Keith Taylor will be speaking at the first ever global day of action, called Animals are Not Freight, on Monday, which sees hundreds of campaigners from more than 30 countries uniting to take action, including a peaceful protest on Parliament Square in London.

The day marks 20 years since the world's worst live export disaster when nearly 70,000 sheep burned or drowned to death as the ship carrying them burst into flames in the Indian Ocean and sank.

Some twenty-eight organisations around the world are joining ranks for the day to host rallies, marches, and talks – from London to Paris and Tel Aviv to Sydney.

Celebrity support comes from Downton Abbey star and animal welfare activist, Peter Egan, who has helped to promote the day of action by starring in a short online film.

The Kent Against Live Exports group had planned a similar demonstration in Ramsgate on Saturday.

Mr Taylor, who is also the Green Party's animals spokesperson, said: "It is a privilege to join forces with so many passionate campaigners as we take this fight right to the government's doorstep.

"Live exports is a barbaric industry that must be completely abolished. As a member of the European Parliament, I have written to the new UK minister for animals, Lord Gardiner, urging him to support the Europe-wide Stop The Trucks campaign.

"The campaign will mount a fresh call from national governments to amend European regulations to stamp out this inhumane practice."

Mr Driver said: "It's very important to have that level of support and I think people are beginning to see that the long-distance transportation of these animals in horrendous conditions is completely unacceptable.

"Soon, much like fox hunting was, I think this will be the big nationwide animal welfare campaign."

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UK Cycling hoping for chain reaction from Rio Olympics

A new nationwide initiative designed to build on the golden success of Team GB in the velodrome is being launched at Gravesend's Cyclopark this weekend...

By Adele Couchman
adele.couchman@archant.co.uk

FOLLOWING our Olympians' sensational fortnight in Rio, the national governing body of UK cycling is trialling a new project here in Kent to encourage budding riders into the sport.

With Team GB's cyclists taking home 12 medals and making a third consecutive win at the top of the Olympic medal tally, British Cycling is hoping to achieve even more homegrown success through a new social biking event – starting today (Sunday) in Gravesend.

Exclusively piloted in just two places around the UK, Cycle Circuits aim to provide a cycling alternative to global fitness craze Parkrun – a free, weekly 5k timed jog in areas of open space.

Hosted at Cyclopark, home to north Kent's giant 43 hectare open-air bike park, cyclists can expect a free tracking device to record their average time on the circuit – a motivator to improve times and distance.

Organisers say the rare opportunity is being trialled in Gravesend to make use of the area's world class cycling facilities.

Andrew Chaston, British Cycling's recreation manager for the south east, said: "We're always trying to take talented cyclists onto the Olympic stage, and after such a successful fortnight in Rio we wanted to run a programme to inspire people to get out on a bike.

"Our traffic-free route at Cyclopark means anyone can get involved - but with the added tracking devices the circuit is also open to those looking to test their best time and distances.

"We're really excited this pilot is coming to Kent and if things go well Cycle Circuits will be taken countrywide next summer."

After opening in 2012, Cyclopark is the largest of its kind in Europe, offering a 2.9km-long road circuit, a 340-metre BMX track and 6km of mountain bike trails.

Naturally, bosses at the multi-million pound activity complex hope potential nationwide sporting projects like Cycle Circuits will put the park on the map.

"Being part of the Cycle Circuits pilot provides a great opportunity for more people to experience what Cyclopark has to offer, which we hope will lead to continued use of our first class facilities," said Cyclopark's CEO Alex Flint.

One of the stars of the Games, Jason Kenny, will also be banging the cycling drum as he heads to Brands Hatch early next month to take part in its Revolve24 event.

A series of cycling challenges – it is synonymous with the main, gruelling 24-hour race but is complemented by a six-hour relay, and a new 12-hour 'Dusk 'til Dawn' challenge.

The circuit, near Swanley in Longfield, formed much of the Paralympic Games road cycling route in 2012, earning rave reviews at the time.

Kenny, who will be taking part in this year's event, said: "Brands Hatch is the best course for this event as you don't have any of the dangers of the road.

"It has a lot of interesting undulations, especially as you get out into the forest. It'll be a real challenge for people as they ride through the night, lighting their own way."

Kent Sports Trust also welcomed efforts to build on Team GB's success through initiatives encouraging people to try out differ-

GOLDEN CHANCE: Rio stars Laura Trott and Jason Kenny (left) and (above) Gravesend's Cyclopark, the largest of its kind in Europe

ent sports the county has to offer.

CEO Steve Wolfe told KoS: "I can't congratulate the whole squad from Team GB enough for their achievements out in Rio. They will provide a sporting legacy for the whole country for many more years to come.

"It was especially pleasing to see so many Kent athletes out there competing and our Ambassadors doing so well.

"To have Dina Asher-Smith return home to Orpington with an Olympic bronze is fantastic. It will be great to take her into Kent schools to inspire that next generation.

"Kat Driscoll, who grew up in Medway, has shown how far you can go with determination and willpower. To finish sixth at the Olympics will encourage so many more girls and boys to take up trampolining for the first time.

"The success of the women's hockey side, with so many of the squad playing for Holcombe Hockey Club and Canterbury Hockey Club, will undoubtedly serve to inspire more people to play the game. We should see both clubs benefit from the ladies returning as Olympic gold medal winners.

"I'd have to say the cycling programme was one of my highlights of the Olympics, so I, as part of the Kent Sports Trust relay team, can't wait to race Jason Kenny in the Revolve24 event over at Brands Hatch on September 10 and 11.

"I'm not a natural cyclist by any stretch of the imagination, but to compete against the six-time Olympic gold medal winner will inspire me and our team as we raise funds for the KST Foundation and Help for Heroes."

The first three cycling trials at Cyclopark, just south of Gravesend alongside the A2, will take place today (Sunday), September 25 and October 22 from 2-4pm.

■ Those looking to attend must register by going to www.goskyride.com/Kent and searching Gravesend in the location bar. Riders wanting to take part must also ensure they bring their own bicycle.

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Planned engineering work for the Thameslink Programme means there will be no Southeastern services at Cannon Street and fewer Southeastern services on other routes, as work continues to rebuild London Bridge station.

Please consider changing your journey to work and allow more time, as services will be busier than usual.

For more information, visit
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Ray of Sunshine for Dreamland

It's not been the best of times for Margate's nostalgia-fuelled amusement park but this week it had some good news as it outlined plans for the £1.8m restoration of its cafe and cinema foyer entrance...

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

THE restoration of the former Sunshine Cafe and cinema entrance foyer at Dreamland is set to get underway after a local contractor was appointed to carry out the work this week.

Coombs won the race for the £1.8m contract after Thanet District Council ran an open tender process inviting interest in what it describes as the second phase of major redevelopment at the iconic Margate site.

The work, which is backed by a successful Coastal Communities Fund bid secured in 2014, is set to start on site with immediate effect.

It involves creating a lettable space on the site of the former cafe, which will include repairing the original building fabric, installing and replacing windows, re-roofing, restoring the building's 'fin' and brick fascia, installing a lift, new external signage and installing neon lighting.

Meanwhile, the foyer will be returned to its original 1930s design through the use of new brass hand railings, metal entrance doors, plastering to walls, venetian plaster work to the ceiling, bespoke lighting and signage, internal doors and windows.

This work will enable the former Sunshine Cafe to be brought back to life as a new restaurant for Margate, and the council is working towards identifying a potential operator for the restaurant.

It is hoped this will pave the way for further development of the entire Art Deco Cinema Complex, which forms a major part of the overall site and will come as part of a future phase of the wider Dreamland redevelopment.

It comes as a boost for Dreamland, which has endured a rough few months following the administration of operator Sands and Heritage Ltd, the resignation of CEO Eddie Kemsley and repairs needed for the park's centrepiece – the Scenic Railway.

However, a spokesperson for the amusement park confirmed that testing is now underway and bosses anticipate that the ride will be ready to take passengers soon, going into a bank holiday weekend when footfall is expected to be high.

Thanet North MP Sir Roger Gale told KoS earlier this month he was "concerned" by the breakdown but had faith in the park's ability to attract customers all year round.

John Healey, managing director of Coombs who will be carrying out the work, said: "Coombs are extremely proud to be awarded a further phase of restoration work on this important seafront landmark.

"We look forward to working with Thanet District Council's team and will again employ local labour wherever possible, many of whom have a personal interest and desire to see the Dreamland complex restored to its former glory.

"The completion of phase two works will significantly contribute to the continued regeneration of Margate."

Chris Wells, the Ukip leader of the district council, added: "We're delighted to be working with Coombs, a local contractor, on such an iconic project.

"The restoration of Dreamland has always been about working towards the redevelopment of the entire site, to make it flow and work as a whole entertainment complex.

"This is the second major phase for the site and is a significant step forward which will further increase visitor enthusiasm in Dreamland as a destination."

GLORY DAYS: The former cafe at Dreamland's Cinema building in 1936 CREDIT: Margate Museum

Competition

Win tickets to Thank You for the Music...

SATURDAY night and the lights are low. . . the Assembly Hall Tunbridge Wells is the place to go. . .

The world's longest-running ABBA concert show is coming to town to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Swedish super group's biggest selling hit – Dancing Queen.

The song was a million-selling, number-one hit in 13 countries and it forms the climax to the international hit stage show Thank You for the Music.

The production – which also features the UK's most successful Bee Gees revue – is now in its 23rd year and is coming to Tunbridge Wells on Saturday, September 10, at 7.30pm

Show producer Michael Taylor boasts that the spectacle has been delighting live music fans for longer than Bjorn, Benny, Agnetha and Frida did during the 70s and 80s.

"Dancing Queen represents the pinnacle of the group's career, and we have produced a brand-new show rocking the sound of "the right music" for 2016."

The set list, drawn from ABBA's nine number one hit singles, nine chart-topping albums and 19 top 20 singles in the UK, includes solid-gold hits like Super Trouper; Waterloo; Mamma Mia; Thank You for the Music; Gimme, Gimme, Gimme; Knowing Me Knowing You; Mamma Mia and, of course, Dancing Queen.

Thank You for the Music also features show stealers The Magic of the Bee Gees. The trio, backed by a live band, perform original Bee Gees' hits like Staying Alive, Massachusetts, Night Fever and How Deep is Your Love as well as million-sellers penned for other artists by the Bee Gees including Islands in the Stream, If I Can't Have You and Chain Reaction.

We have six pairs of tickets to what promises to be an amazing show. For your chance to win answer the simple question below:

■ **Thank You for the Music celebrates the 40th anniversary of which hit single?**

a) Dancing Queen
b) Waterloo
c) Gimme, Gimme, Gimme

Good luck, the deadline for entries is 11.59pm on September 5.

To enter, text KENT followed by MUSIC and your answer then your first name, surname and email address to 63333, e.g. KENTMUSIC C JOHN SMITH johnsmith@email.com. Texts cost 50p plus standard network rates. Winners will be selected from all correct entries. The promoter's decision is final. Usual terms and conditions apply. Entries received after the closing date will not be counted, but you may still be charged. Alternatively enter by post to Thank you for the Music Competition, Archant KOS Media, Kent House, Station Road, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PP, including your name, address, postcode and contact telephone number.

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Corbyn supporters set to rally as rival Smith makes a county visit

Labour suffered another blow in a county council by-election, but supporters of the under-fire party leader are launching a campaign in Thanet as Owen Smith outlined his own plans in trip to Medway

By Simon Allin & Tom Pyman
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A CAMPAIGN to "transform" the Isle of Thanet will launch this weekend when supporters of Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn descend on Ramsgate.

Mr Corbyn has proved a polarising figure since June's EU Referendum, and is currently facing a leadership challenge, although bookies make him strong favourite to remain at the head of the party.

However, the Momentum Thanet group will show their support for the under-fire leader and reveal a plan to create better jobs, homes, health and education in the district at a rally on Saturday, September 3.

Organiser Christine Tongue said: "Just after Jeremy Corbyn was first elected, shadow chancellor John McDonnell came to Ramsgate and challenged us to produce an alternative plan for Thanet which he's promised to support.

"This rally will kick off our attempt to meet his challenge.

"For too long Thanet has relied on businesses coming from outside to regenerate the idea.

"Now the time has come for local people, with the help of funding from government, to rebuild our community."

"We want to change our community for the better – and we want to have fun doing it. Everyone is welcome."

However, Ms Tongue believes the re-election of Mr Corbyn is essential to Momentum's bid to transform the isle.

"We need a revived, reunited Labour Party with Jeremy at the helm to give a chance for new ideas to flourish here," she said.

"But we also desperately need an end to austerity policies and new ideas to end Thanet's persistent high unemployment and low-wage economy."

There will be a number of speakers at the rally including Ian Hodson, national president of the Bakers' Union, and Jackie Walker, the vice chair of national Momentum, who lives in Broadstairs.

The rally will assemble at 11am by the Obelisk, Harbour Parade.

It comes after Mr Corbyn's opponent in the Labour leadership race, Owen Smith, told supporters on a visit to Medway on Friday that "Kent needs a pay rise."

He said: "Six years of Tory austerity have resulted in the sharpest fall ever recorded in living standards for low paid British workers.

"While the bonus culture booms again, 16,000 workers in Medway are earning less than the living wage.

"As the next Labour prime minister, I will implement radical plans to deliver the biggest increase in living standards in a generation.

"I will deliver a real living wage for everyone over the age of eighteen; increased support for low-paid workers through our social security system; and a revolution in workers' rights to give people a strong voice at work."

Mr Smith also outlined his plans for the NHS and for a 'British New Deal' and was accompanied by Rachel Garrick, a local Labour Party member who formerly founded and chaired the Medway branch of the pro-Corbyn momentum group, but has since become disillusioned with the leader.

She said: "Over the last ten months, I became increasingly frustrated with the leadership of the Labour Party.

"I hear the policies put out by John McDonnell and Jeremy Corbyn and I wholeheartedly support them.

"But in practice I see a leader confined by an inability to compromise and to reach out to make alliances — the basis of pragmatic politics.

"Owen is a committed, soft left politician who understands that the Labour movement has cried out for change.

"He is offering policies that sit firmly on the left but he understands how best to get those policies across to the general public.

"He can unite the entirety of our movement and make a real difference to people's lives."

SPEECH: Owen Smith visited Medway last week to drum up support for his campaign, but current leader Jeremy Corbyn remains well-backed in Kent

Labour suffered a local blow last week after losing a crucial seat in a Kent County Council by-election.

Tory candidate Diane Marsh was victorious in Gravesham East with 1,758 votes to Lyn Milner's 1,538 for Labour – representing a 36 per cent share of the vote on a 16.38 per cent turnout, the result coming just weeks after the party lost a seat on Ashford council to Ukip.

The council's Labour leader, Gordon Cowan, told KoS: "Obviously we are disappointed that we lost the seat. We would have hoped to have held onto it."

Cllr Cowan did not blame the furore around Mr Corbyn for the loss, however, believing it was more to do with a low voter turnout during the holiday period.

"Labour has its problems, but I do not think the result was based on that," he said.

"Lots of people, including many working-class families, are on holiday.

"In general, we would have had a much higher turnout and we would have got the result we deserved.

"I am confident that in eight months time we will have that seat back."

Conservative leader on the council, Paul Carter, told KoS: "I am absolutely delighted. The whole team worked exceedingly hard and got the result they earned.

"It was regarded as a very safe Labour seat and the result reflects on Theresa May making a good start in government."

Cllr Carter added that Labour's national leadership did not help their situation, and that, in contrast to Labour's infighting, the Conservatives had shown it was possible to have a quick and efficient change at the top of the party.

"I am really optimistic for the future of local government," he added.

"The previous administration did not have a lot of trust in local government, but the new team will reflect on the strengths of local government."

Senior Labour figures in the county have been quick to air their scepticism about Mr Corbyn.

Discussing the potential for a new centre-left party emerging, perhaps with the Liberal Democrats, Medway councillor and the party's candidate in May's police and crime commissioner election, Tristan Osborne said the divisive leader was holding Labour back.

He told KoS earlier this month that a victory for Mr Corbyn would see the party "haemorrhage support" and that someone of Mr Smith's stature was needed to win back votes, particularly in Kent where the party has now fallen behind Ukip as well as the Conservatives.

"We need a leader that resonates nationally because if you don't have that you're not going to win and if we don't win marginal seats in this county it doesn't bode well," he said.

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Women Seeking

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SINGLE lady, 65, blonde, quiet nature, likes the outdoors, picnics, jiving, WLTM single gentleman for companionship and possible romance. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423411**

KATIE 35yrs, slender well educated brunette seeks no strings mutual pleasure with gent 40+ Must be discreet, married or single. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3002 Box 419673**

WIDOW, 70s, brown hair and eyes, likes walking, pub lunches, places of interest, good company and lots more, seeking a kind genuine male, a n/s, 70-80. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423359**

KIM, 32yrs, attractive blonde lady seeks discreet gent for daytime distractions. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3006 Box 421657**

GENUINE lady, 67, slim, GSOH, caring, honest, active, likes most things in life, days out, countryside, animals, long walks, visiting interesting places, cooking and holidays, WLTM a caring, honest male with GSOH, 67-73, with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423289**

JANE, young 41, very broadminded seeks chap any age for discreet no strings fun, any age, no time wasters ACA. **Tel: No: 0906 515 3010 Box: 409715**

BARBARA, is a caring lady who seeks a man to care for, she will do anything to make you happy. Just give her a call today. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422411**

PAT, petite blonde lady, GSOH, young looking for her age, seeks genuine gent any age with GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422393**

KERRY, 35yrs, married in open relationship, attractive, tall, slim and very presentable. Seeks discreet gent any age for casual pleasurable encounters. **Tel: 0906 515 3042 Box 422363**

KIM, 50, lovely kind, 5ft 6, brown eyes, dark curly hair, curvy figure seeks nice genuine guy for LTR, same age as me. **Text only Mailbox: 5512493**

SOPHIA young 40yrs, married but bored, seeks discreet adult fun, any area, all calls answered. **Tel: 0906 515 3018 Box: 413399**

RITA, , seeks a genuine male for friendship, days out, shes very friendly, genuine and social, give her a call ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422403**

EMILY, mature well educated lady, blonde and smart and broadminded seeks gent any age for no strings fun. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3022 Box 421375**

MERRY, widow, dark hair, kind and caring, hoping to meet a kind gent for friendship, possibly more. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422339**

LORRAINE, attractive solvent brunette, 34yrs, own house/car wltm gent any age, looks unimportant but must have GSOH. ACA. **Tel: 0906 515 3030 Box 422415**

50YRS, old attractive lady. Sheila, caring honest, seeks discreet gent. ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422469**

KATIE, 39yrs, loves dressing up, role play, fun etc. Hoping to meet like minded chap any age but must be understanding. **Text Only Box: 4085012**

TAMLA, naughty but nice, curvy kitten! I am 46yrs and love to have some fun. Dates/Chats, something different. PIs call me. **Text Only Box: 4185035**

GENUINE, GSH, attractive, outgoing professional female, 55. Enjoys keeping fit, socialising and travel, WLTM similar male for relationship. **Text only Mailbox: 5453851**

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTM similar aged gentleman with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421427**

JO, mature understanding worldly Essex lady, seeks generous gent for regular fetish fantasy role-play, discretion assured. **Text only Mailbox: 5320299**

FEMALE, blue eyes, slim and pretty, from South Africa, young fifties, seeking a sincere, retired gentleman, who resides close to the sea. **Text only Mailbox: 5456242**

SINGLE late 60s female, n/s, GSOH, likes going out and being active, not fun on my own, seeking single male, 66-70, n/s, with GSOH, to share each others interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421433**

MATURE lady early 80s, family orientated, likes dancing, holidays especially cruising, WLTM similar aged gentleman with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421429**

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

ORIENTAL lady, honest, caring, loves walking, WLTM a reliable, sincere man for LTR. **Text only Mailbox: 5443434**

FEMALE, young 58, 5ft2, size 14, blonde, bubbly, GSOH, warm, loving, kind and caring, loves music, animals, seaside, looking for that special someone. **Text only Mailbox: 4715158**

GENUINE single female 49, seeking good-natured, intelligent, polite, single male for friendship/relationship. **Text only to Mailbox: 4198603**

KIND, caring lady of African origin, living in UK for past 20 years, looking for a gentleman who is kind and caring, must have a GSOH. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421041**

LUCY, 32, blonde, tall and slim, looking for a casual fling, nothing serious. Discretion needed and assured. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420237**

ANGELA, 53, African origin, looking for a kind, genuine, caring gentleman, 60 years +. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421039**

SINGLE slim female, 68, n/s, GSOH, likes cooking, walking etc, seeks male, single, slim 65-70, n/s, with similar interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 420091**

SLIM female GSOH, 5'3, Likes walking, pub lunches, days out, looking for soul mate, smart appearance, similar interests N/S GSOH, easy going. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4762600**

KIND lady, 50s, been broken hearted, seeks kind, genuine man for caring relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419889**

MARION, early 70s, young at heart, GSOH, active, likes walking, gardening, meals out, travel, theatre and animals, looking for male friendship to share interests. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 419657**

CHANTELLE, 5ft3 light brown/blonde hair, blue eyes, like nights in/out, walks, animals, romance seeks honest guy. Littlehampton. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4923883**

MARIE, very lonely middle-aged woman, looking for a kind hearted older man, late 70s/early 80s for friendship/companionship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418955**

RACHEL late 40s, blonde, blue eyes and very voluptuous. Looking for a kind, caring honest man. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418741**

AMANDA, 36, tall, slim, busty brunette seeks man, any age, any area, for discreet daytime fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418117**

HELEN, widow 58, medium build, 5ft 4ins, blonde, GSOH, likes a chat, days out, looking to start again with someone of similar age. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 376243**

SARAH 29yr old pretty slim single mum of one, interesting, lively, good fun, enjoys nights in/out, music, seeking similar easy going, genuine, honest man/dad to get to know. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 415841**

Men Seeking

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GENTLEMAN, 76yrs old, clean-shaven with a good head of hair and a smart dresser, hoping to meet lady for friendship/relationship. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423645**

DAVE genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 388372**

BRIAN, 6ft3, fit, bit grey but genuine and kind, looking for a naughty female, for no strings adult fun, if you're interested please get back to me, ACA. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423483**

LIVELY old boy, OHAC, near sea in Folkestone, into red wine, garlic and Radio 3, seeks lady companion/lover, 58-68 yo. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422621**

MALE, 53, 5ft6, single, hardworking, looking for slim/small lady, 40-56. Maidstone, Kent. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423363**

OUTGOING male, seeking attractive female, likes sports, music, cinema and nights out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414793**

ANDREW, 50, slim to medium build, lives in Ashford/Kent area, WLTM a women, 40-70, for discreet fun, would be great to hear from you so get back to find out more! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423271**

SLIM, 5ft 6 white male WLTM 18 to 42 year old lady for friendship. **Text only Mailbox: 5441709**

GARY, 53, caring, likes snooker, bowls, looking for a nice woman to meet and fall in love with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423145**

EDWARD, 77, looking for a companion South East area of Kent, for holidays, days out, social events, and lots more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423039**

HAPPY go lucky divorced man, 48, 6ft, well built, seeks gorgeous female to share love and laughs with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 383719**

TONY black male, 58, 5ft6, med build, n/s, seeking a local mature fun loving female 40/75 in the Chatham/Gillingham area for discreet fun. **Text only Mailbox: 5459052**

BARRY 47, 6ft, well built, seeks female for wining, dining and fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 361787**

GARY 48, 6ft, well-built, dark hair, brown eyes, seeks passionate female for fun times in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 387175**

VINCENT 48, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun nights in and out. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 377397**

MALE, widower, n/s, would love to meet buxom friendly lady, up to 70, for friendship at first, interests include all types of music, walking, quizzes. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422957**

PAUL 49 5ft 8ins likes eating/nights in/out seeks loving female for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 404013**

HELLO my name is Paul, 43, 5ft9, from Sittingbourne in Kent, looking for someone to have some fun with and see where it goes! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422905**

WRITER, tall, slim, fit, natural dark hair, generous, seeks lady for erotic rendezvous, I will make it worth your while! **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422777**

49YR old male, 6ft, well built, seeks female to wine/dine and have fun with. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 390929**

SUGAR Daddy available! Mature, tall, slim, natural dark hair, seeks lady, age unimportant. Not afraid of commitment. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418889**

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

48YR old divorced male, 6ft, well built, seeks lady for fun and laughter. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 380789**

PHILLIP, 66, into farming and country life, looking for a loyal, genuine lady, someone I can trust, to go on holidays with and spend time together. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422699**

TONY, early 60s, 6ft, slim, fit, easy going, looking for no strings fun with a lady, age unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422643**

TALL single early 60's male looking for pure hearted lady for LTR. **Text only Mailbox: 5496781**

HANDSOME male, mid 40s, dark hair, hazel eyes, wishes to meet appropriate female for fun, friendship and perhaps more, please get in touch if interested. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422587**

LOCAL Sevenoaks man, seeks local lady for fun and friendship, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 417127**

PAUL 52, seeks loving female for exciting times, meals out, weekends away, cosy nights in. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 418077**

MALE, 54, shyish, looking for fun times with a lady, 60-70, with GSOH, status unimportant. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422431**

PROFESSIONAL, romantic male, 44, likes meals out, cinema, music, holidays, seeks female, 30-55 for LTR. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 250195**

CHRIS, from Folkestone, 71, 5ft9, widower, green eyes, lonely, n/s, OHAC, likes gardening, the coast, pubs, dining out, holidays, cruises, days out, WLTM similar lady to share interests, can travel. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422375**

PAUL GSOH, 5ft 8ins, medium build, seeking Miss Right for LTR to put the spark back into life. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 391970**

MIKE, 64, outgoing person, enjoys life, likes sport, cricket, nice meals out, holidays, WLTM someone to share interests and quality time. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422329**

COLIN, 56, 6ft, medium build, clean and tidy with a tidy beard, I'm after some TLC with no strings adult fun. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422359**

HARLOW male, 40, kind, attractive, happy, considerate looking to meet slim female for LTR, children welcome. **Text only Mailbox: 5468389**

FRIENDLY passionate male, 55, 6ft, medium build, clean, discreet, lots of TLC to offer, seeks female for fun times. Canterbury **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 381222**

PAUL 48, 5ft 8ins, GSOH, likes music, cinema, seeks female for fun, friendship and LTR. Tunbridge Wells. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 371985**

MALE, 58, very outgoing, looking for attractive female, slim to medium build, for adult fun and maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421883**

MALE, 55 looking for mature lady for outings and adult fun, easy going, GSOH, nice looking and a bit shy. **Text only Mailbox: 4922399**

YOUNG 50s male looking for discreet daytime kisses and cuddles with nice female. Kent and Sussex. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 421601**

FEMININE sensual female, slim-medium build wanted by slim, kind male for daytime meets, maybe more. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 414809**

JIM 45, slim 5'8, blue eyes, short brown hair, very fit, would like to meet older lady for regular N S A fun. East Sussex. **Text only Mailbox: 4529089**

Gay Seeking

REMEMBER: Calls cost £1.55 per minute plus your phone company's access charge. Texts cost £1.50 per message received.

BI male, aged 54 seeks similar for friendship and fun. **Text only Mailbox: 4623598**

TOBY, 41yrs, recently divorced, now seeking different relationship, bi curious but not gay, like minded to me, any age. **Text Only Box: 4125006**

PETER, 85, 5ft6, semi retired, WLTM a man for casual meets, nothing too heavy. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 423423**

MALE looking for male, 30-60 for no strings fun times. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406049**

EASY going, friendly guy, slim, n/s, likes the outdoors, gardening, cinema, theatre, music, WLTM a nice guy, 50-60s. **Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 422741**

BI guy heavy build, WLTM assertive adventurous white or Indian guy for mutual pleasure. **Text only to Mailbox no: 4321273**

Friends

FEMALE seeking genuine straight female for daytrips, out to meet socially for lunch/coffee. **Text only to Mailbox No: 4748240**

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TRIBUTE: The youngest Osmond brother says Andy Williams was like family to them

Jimmy Osmond details his Moon River and Me tour

The performer has returned to the UK with a tour in honour of Andy Williams

AFTER creating an avid UK fanbase during his time on MasterChef, Jimmy Osmond is returning to the UK in September with his new tour, Moon River and Me,

The show started off as what Mr Osmond describes as "Andy's pet project". Andy Williams built and produced the show for TV before passing away in 2012 of bladder cancer.

When speaking to Mr Osmond about the theatre show and why he decided to take it on and travel it around the world he said: "Andy asked me to buy his theatre before he died because he wanted me to keep his musical presence going.

"I grew up with Andy, he was like family to us. My first TV appearance was aged three on his show.

"The show was only meant to be in his theatre, but Andy was so loved by everyone that we were inundated with offers to take it all over the world."

Moon River and Me has, according to Mr Osmond, received great praise so far. "There's been an amazing reaction, especially from people of a certain age."

Perhaps this is why the tour has expanded its dates and locations across the UK. Mr Osmond added: "Originally there was only meant to be five shows in the UK and then the next thing I know, there's 27.

"I guess this proves that sometimes you're more sought after when gone."

When asked how he'd describe the show in one word, Mr Osmond responds with "intimate", but then expands with details of the show.

"In the beginning, I was just producing the show," muses Mr Osmond. "I brought in Charlie Green from Britain's Got Talent to sing Andy's songs because he has that soulful voice but then I felt like we needed someone who had a connection with Andy.

"It made sense that I host it."

However, the star is quick to make it clear that the show is "not about me, it's about Andy's music."

Telling more details of what the show entails, Mr Osmond said: "There's always something happening as songs last three minutes, and then there's special guests.

"In the middle of the show we come down into the audience and it becomes interactive and fun.

"There's lots of comedy as well," he adds.

The singer promises to sing Mr William's most famous songs such as Music To Watch Girls By, Happy Heart, Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You, Almost There, and May Each Day, and comments that 'Andy sings alongside me in the show. There's video recordings of him singing which play while I perform.'

Having already started his tour in the US, and with one more stop in Las Vegas before flying to the UK, Mr Osmond says he's preparing for his time here by "sleeping a lot" but then laughs saying: "I'm used to the travelling, I grew up on the road, in a new city everyday."

The Moon River and Me tour will be playing in three Kent venues, Central Hall, Chatham on October 1, Orchard Theatre, Dartford, on October 11, and Churchill Theatre, Bromley, on October 17.

Prices range from £18 to £33.50 (concessions get £2 off) and can be purchased from the venue's box offices.

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Frankenstein director reveals behind-the-scenes secrets

By Emily King
emily.king@archant.co.uk

MARY Shelley's gothic horror, Frankenstein, is a timeless classic, which is now coming to the stage.

The artistic team behind Blackeyed Theatre's 2013 production of Dracula, have come together once more to reimagine Frankenstein. The team have enfused together storytelling, live music, and theatricality to bring a fresh take on what is considered to be a masterpiece of fiction literature.

Eliot Giuralarocca is the director behind the new theatre production, and when asked what enticed him to take on Frankenstein he said: "I didn't need much enticing to be fair. Andrian McDougall the artistic director of Blackeyed Theatre approached me with the idea and I jumped at the chance to do it.

"It's a cracking, gripping, classic story that has stood the test of time and when you are presented with an opportunity to have a go at something you like that you simply have to grasp it with both hands."

Adapting a story of this status must come with some challenges and Mr Giuralarocca says, "we have a cast of five performers to tell the story and I think it's definitely going to be a busy show for them, a real ensemble piece with a bold 'actor led' performance style.

"I envisage the company on stage all the time bringing the story to life and moving fluidly from one location to the next, puppeteering, changing roles, manipulating objects, moving furniture, creating environments, playing instruments and underscoring action with percussion, voice and sound as necessary."

Mr Giuralarocca believes that the audience can expect a show that "celebrates the excitement of live theatre using inventive, bold storytelling to bring Mary Shelley's dark gothic thriller to life.

"If audiences leave the theatre excited and entertained by that they've seen as well as being moved and challenged by the complex moral questions that this tale provokes, I'd be delighted."

Blackeyed Theatre will be bringing Frankenstein to Margate's Theatre Royal on November 12.

Standard tickets cost £15 and can be purchased from the box office by visiting theatreroyalmargate.com

THRILLING: The show is a reimaged version of Mary Shelley's gothic classic

Chinese State Circus visits

GANDEY World Class Productions will bring the Chinese State Circus back to The Orchard, Dartford on September 12.

Visit orchardtheatre,co,uk or call 01322 220000 to book.

Charity fun day for dogs

WOULDHAM fun day will include a dog show which aims to help and promote responsible dog ownership.

The event will take place on August 27 at Wouldham Recreation Ground.

Proceeds will go to Abigail's Footsteps, and Chinese Club of Great Britain Rescue.

Thames arts festival

GRAVESEND will be a part of the new arts festival, Estuary.

The takes place from September 17 to October 2.

Gravesend will be hosting the Lightship LV21 and moored at St Andrew's Quay everyday.

Cinderella graces Tonbridge

THIS year Cinderella will return as the next community pantomime in Tonbridge on December 10 and 11.

The show will be presented by Tonbridge Lions Club, and produced by the CLIPS Theatre Company.

For tickets, call 01732 359966

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Oh my country, she's back!

COMEDIAN Shappi Khorsandi is back with a new tour this Autumn.

Tickets for her Oh My Country! From Morris Dancing to Morrisey at Chatham Brook Theatre on September 17, are on sale now at medwayticketslive.co.uk

Market refurb in numbers

GRAVESEND'S Borough Market has seen a complete refurbishment and released figures detailing the construction.

Twenty three construction workers have consumed more than 620 cups of tea since the renovation started at the start of the year. All is set to open on November 19.

A classic 'reimagined'

NORTHERN Ballet are bringing Les Ballets de Monte Carlo's production of Romeo and Juliet to Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre from September 20-24.

Tickets are available from the box office on 01227 787787.

Let rip with Letz Zep

LED Zeppelin tribute band, Letz Zep, are playing at The Stag Theatre in Sevenoaks on September 16.

The tour marks the 45th anniversary of Led Zeppelin's 4th album, which is untitled, being released.

Call 01732 450175 for tickets.

Much loved production of Dirty Dancing is back

By Emily King
emily.king@archant.co.uk

HITTING the road and heading to Kent with a brand new cast is the greatly anticipated show tour of Dirty Dancing.

The show has already sold around 150,000 tickets with some nights being sold out, meaning they've added extra dates to the tour.

The classic story is brought to the stage still featuring hit songs such as Hungry Eyes, Hey! Baby, Do You Love Me, and The Time Of My Life,

This tour follows two blockbuster West End runs, two UK tours, and international productions.

Johnny Castle will be played by Lewis Griffiths. Mr Grittiths has previously starred as Nick Massi on the Uk tour of Jersey Boys, as well as featuring in Ghost, Legally Blonde, and Priscilla Queen of the Desert.

Katie Hartland will take on the role of Baby Houseman, and the tour will be her professional theatre debut since graduating from Royal Central School in 2015.

Penny Johnson will be played by Carlie Milner, who is a regular on the Dirty Dancing scene having started as a member of the ensemble before taking over the role of Penny in 2015.

This production of Dirty Dancing has been worldwide since it begun in Australia in 2004, and the first UK tour in 2011 made £42m from theatres across the country.

The show has been produced by Karl Sydo, Joye Entertainment, and Paul Elliot, and was written by Eleanor Bergstein the scriptwriter of the 1987 film.

The tour was originally only coming to the Orchard Theatre in Dartford from September 1 to 10 but will also now arrive at the Churchill Theatre in Bromley from March 6 to 11, 2017.

To book tickets for Dartford visit orchard threatre.co.uk or call 01322 220000. For Bromley, visit churchilltheatre.co.uk or call 02032 856000.

REHERSALS: Shows start in August so it's full speed ahead

CAST: The team are made up of old and new cast members

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Georgie Hayden's recipe book for a calmer life

She may be a part of Jamie Oliver's food team but a family tragedy is what spurred on her cook book

"WE cook on so many levels, not just to feed ourselves," says Georgie Hayden, taking a sip of tea.

As part of Jamie Oliver's 'Food Team', the bubbly brown-eyed Londoner cooks for a living, dreaming up and styling recipes for Oliver's books, magazine and TV shows. But she also cooked her way through a traumatic maternity leave, after her son Archie died just before birth two years ago.

"I can't remember what happened for the first few months. I think we must have lived off food from nice people. I don't think I cooked for a while. I really scared myself. I thought, 'I just don't care, I actually don't care about food or anything'," she recalls. "You feel really vulnerable and I didn't want to go out."

Fearing she'd lost her love of food, Hayden gathered all her cookbooks together and started thinking about food for her and husband Pete.

"After a few months of calming down, I thought, 'Let's start again... You're going to sit down and start making a weekly meal plan'. Then I would drive myself to the supermarket and do the shop, and that's actually what got me out again."

The familiarity and routine of cooking was like therapy and slowly eased Hayden, 34, through her bereavement, while the meal plans gave her a sense of control.

"In those early days, I was convinced Pete was going to die [too]. I thought, 'If I can feed us really nice food, at least I know we're OK'."

HEALING: Georgie Hayden

What started out as a simple project has been gently nurtured into Hayden's first cookbook, It's a book to turn to when you've had a tough day - full of warming, comforting and revitalising recipes.

In his foreword, Jamie Oliver says he loves Hayden 'like a sister', and she is equally full of praise for her mentor.

"He's phenomenal and he really cares. It sounds cheesy, but the Food Team is family and it's the most inspiring place to be."

Hayden's real family has had a huge impact on her love of food, too.

Her dad worked in the family's Greek restaurant while her mum stayed home, teaching Hayden and her sister to bake. It sparked a lifelong passion.

While Hayden tries to eat well, she thinks we've all become a bit too obsessed with health food.

"What's healthy for me is taking the time to cook something and sit down and actually eat it properly."

And, she says, there's nothing wrong with making life easy for yourself.

"Something can be quick, it can be delicious and it can still be OK for you; an omelette is great. We definitely have a lot of breakfast for dinner!"

Hayden's already planning her next cookbook - full of Cypriot food - but for now, she's pleased to have created a legacy for Archie with her first one.

Exhibition of artworks

ST Mary amd St Eanswythe Church in Folkestone is hosting an exhibition of artworks by Folkestone Art Society for the first time in September.

An aution will also be held in the church with the aim of raising funds for needed restoration work.

The exhibition and autions will take place from September 13 - 17 and more information can be found via quarterhouse.co.uk

WiFi interactive show

WIFI Wars, a new interactive game show, is coming to Maidstone's Hazlitt Studio on September 23, and Canterbury's Gulbenkian Cinema on November 3.

The show is live and the audience play along. By logging into the WiFi Wars network with your phone audiences are able to compete in a range of games, quizzez, and challenges to win the show and prizes. Tickets are available from venue box offices.

Portrait of Britain

ART show, Portrait of Britain, is coming to Bluewater and Lakeside in September.

The exhibition includes art featuring the public on an unprecedented scale. It will take over screens in shopping centres, train stations, and high streets throughout the UK.

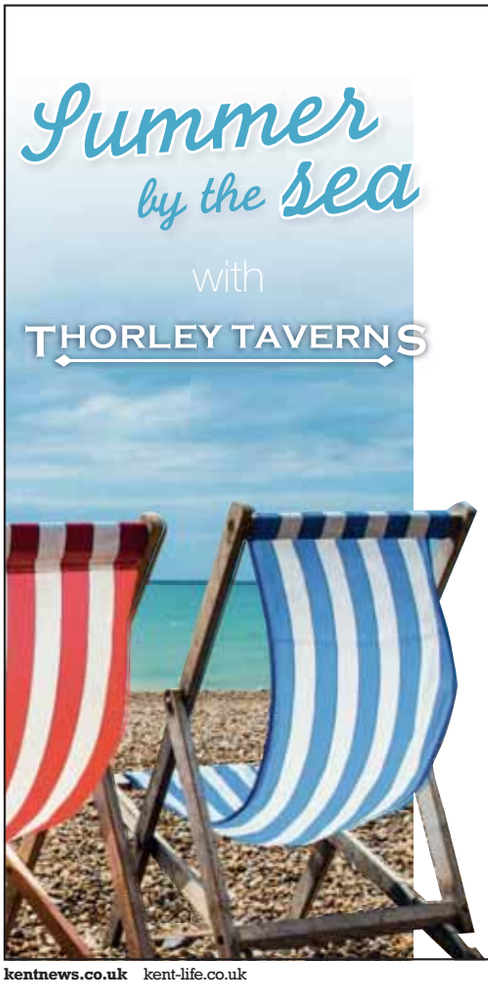
Organised by the British Journal of Photography and JCDecaux the exhibition consists of 100 portraits with the aim of confronting the public with a reflection of themselves.

Folkstone goes to Pieces

SINGER, Michele Stodart of The Magic Numbers, will play a gig at Folkestone Quarterhouse on September 22.

Ms Stodart's new album, Pieces, comes a decade after rock band The Magic Numbers landed in the top ten with the debut album.

Tickets can be purchased from the box office on 01303 760750 or visit folkestone-quartehouse.co.uk



The Captain Digby

The Captain Digby is an award winning family restaurant in Thanet and one of the most popular places to visit all year round. The Digby caters for couples and families alike with fantastic views overlooking Kingsgate Bay for the adults and an indoor play area for the children. It's well worth a visit, a warm welcome awaits.

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Tartar Frigate

The historic Tartar Frigate is one of the only 18th century flint restaurants in Kent. Widely renowned as one of the best seafood restaurants in Kent, the Harbour restaurant boasts stunning panoramic views over Viking Bay in Broadstairs. If seafood isn't for you then you can take advantage of the extensive menu, which also includes mouth watering traditional dishes from around the world.

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Imaging Durrell's dream of Paxos

TRAVEL REVIEW

by Claire Spreadbury, Press Association

IT's been 15 years since I last visited this Paxos. Back then, it was all booze and bathing, but this time I'm here with my family, discovering a land more akin to the one Gerald Durrell wrote about in My Family And Other Animals.

Our villa, Milou, is a grand affair – set off the beaten track at the top of a hill – with nothing surrounding it but a handful of other properties.

The front door opens into an enormous games room. We make downstairs our slumber zone, with a main bedroom leading out to the poolside, and a calming twin room, painted to match Greece's country colours of blue and white.

The infinity pool provides hours of entertainment for the kids. And the view is enough to take the relaxation factor up a notch or two.

Despite being a sleep-deprived, overworked and consistently exhausted parent, this villa escape is making me feel young and energised.

We spend our days gorging on Greek salad with fat and furiously red tomatoes, crunchy cucumber, giant lumps of local feta cheese and lashings of olive oil and oregano. And come the evening, James lights the BBQ and cooks the most enormous sausages ever seen, pork and chicken kebabs, giant peppers, and what can only be described as a 'nine-bar' of halloumi, all bought in the local shops at Gaios, the island's capital, and beautiful Loggos, both just a few miles away.

A car is essential here. Even just getting supplies for the villa is tricky without wheels.

Measuring around a mere eight miles from one end to the other, Paxos doesn't take long to get around, though roads can be tricky to navigate. We easily get lost amid rural roads, while trying to avoid pedestrians, shush unbelievably excited children and translate Greek road signs.

We head into Gaios, admiring the perky pink and white flowers on the Oleander trees that line the road.

A quarter of Paxos' permanent residents live here (about 600), where the Venetian stone-flagged square leads to a picturesque harbour, and at sunrise fishermen sell their catch on marble slabs.

Tavernas spill out onto pavements and, strangely, there are a couple of fish spas.

For the best food, we're told to go to Loggos. I sit, sipping a strawberry daiquiri and watching fish flutter beneath the surface, while a boy stands on a boat, his big bronzed belly proudly on show while he whizzes a homemade fishing line into the sea.

We find a craggy bit of headland near Lakka, Paxos' most northerly tip, where giant rocks peer over and stand tall from the sea. The girls while away time making stone towers out of pebbles while I investigate a growing green mass with bulbous, almost pod-like ends, that I'm certain must be edible. I look around to ask someone, but there isn't a soul to be seen - just the four of us, deserted on our own idyllic coastland.

Looking back at Loggos, it almost looks like Nyhavn in Copenhagen, the painted properties fading into the distance.

We spend a full day exploring aboard sightseeing boat Lefcothea, which costs 50 Euros for all four of us, stopping to admire ancient rock formations on the way. There's a hotchpotch of people on the trip; a three-generational family, old couples, young lovers and a group of women having the time of their lives.

We pull into Voutoumi, a small, slightly sandy beach (most shorelines are adorned with pebbles in Paxos), where the colour of the sea matches the cloudless sky.

The girls spend an age playing with squirters and telling everyone on the beach (about 25 holidaymakers) how disgusting the water tastes, seconds before sticking their faces in again.

"It's like a sunset in the sea," says Rosie, describing how the colour of the ocean changes from clear to turquoise, into azure and navy. And I smile, thinking Durrell would have been pleased with her description.

When we return to England's less sunny shores, I ask if they'd like to holiday in Paxos again.

"Yakka chakka!" comes the reply.

I'll take that as a yes.

BREATHTAKING: The pool view from Villa Milou

TRAVEL FACTS

:: Cheapflights.co.uk offers return flights from Gatwick to Corfu with easyJet from £142pp. Based on departures on September 27, 2016.

:: Passenger ferry services from Corfu to Paxos need to be purchased separately, and cost approx. 20 Euros pp.

:: Gaios Travel offer car hire from £205 a week. Visit gaiostravel.co.uk

Film Reviews by Damon Smith

SUICIDE SQUAD (15)

Ambitious US government agent Amanda Waller (Viola Davis) fears the arrival of another meta-human like Superman. She proposes the formation of a government-sanctioned crew of incarcerated criminals with the skill set to carry out covert missions with limited chance of success.

The Suicide Squad, as they become known, have micro-bombs implanted in their necks, which can be detonated if they defy orders or stray from the mission brief.

Her hand-picked, sadistic oddballs include Harley Quinn (Margo Robbie), expert marksman Floyd Lawton (Will Smith) aka Deadshot, diamond thief Digger Harkness (Jai Courtney) aka Boomerang, flame-conjuring gang member Chato Santana (Jay Hernandez) aka El Diablo, disfigured cannibal Waylan Jones (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje) aka Killer Croc, and expert climber Christopher Weiss (Adam Beach) aka Slipknot. A possessed archaeologist called June Moone (Cara Delevingne) also serves Waller as part of the murky master plan.

Decorated military officer Rick Flag (Joel Kinnaman) takes charge of the squad, flanked by Lieutenant GQ Edwards (Scott Eastwood) and his personal bodyguard, swordswoman Tatsu Yamashiro (Karen Fukuhara).

Meanwhile, masked vigilante Batman (Ben Affleck) swoops over Gotham and super-villain The Joker (Jared Leto) plots a blood-spattered reunion with girlfriend Harley.

As a first date with these characters, Suicide Squad delivers a lot of slap and not much tickle.

Rating: Three stars

PETE'S DRAGON (PG)

A little boy called Pete (Levi Alexander) is orphaned in a road accident and left to fend for himself in the forest that buffers the community of Millhaven.

The helpless child is rescued from a pack of hungry wolves by a green dragon, which the boy names Elliott.

For six years, Pete (now played by Oakes Fegley) and Elliott grow up side-by-side until a logging operation led by Jack Meacham (Wes Bentley) and his brother (Karl Urban) disturbs the peace.

Jack's wife Grace (Bryce Dallas Howard) discovers Pete living wild and spirits him back to civilisation.

The orphan bonds with her daughter Natalie (Oona Laurence) and father (Robert Redford), who claims to have seen a dragon many years ago.

Pete's Dragon casts a heady spell by combining solid, old-fashioned storytelling with dazzling visuals.

Rating: Four stars

Biological warfare against pests

By Hannah Stephenson
Press Association

FRIENDLY GARDEN: Change from quick-fix chemical sprays to biological approaches

THOSE of us who yearn to ditch the blue pellets and quick-fix chemical sprays in favour of more eco-friendly garden pest controls, should perhaps be taking a biological approach.

Many of us incorporate a variety of plants in our garden to attract beneficial predators such as ladybirds which will gobble up aphid eggs, or hedgehogs, song thrushes and frogs to feast on slugs and snails.

Many organic gardeners have been using nematodes, or microscopic 'eelworms', for years.

Nematodes are tiny micro-organisms which occur naturally in the soil where they hunt down and attack pests.

Chemical giant BASF has the largest specialist nematode production facility in the EU and the only one in the UK, breeding trillions of up to five different species of beneficial nematode to create its Nemasys range, and now has products which will treat many common soil-dwelling pests including vine weevil, chafer grubs, slugs, leatherjackets and ant nests.

Nematodes generally come in sealed packs. Once applied, they will seek out their prey, whether it be slugs, vine weevil or other pests, entering the target's body and releasing bacteria that will kill it.

The nematodes will then reproduce inside the corpse and create a new generation which will hunt for further prey.

The company has also developed an all-round treatment aimed at fruit and veg growers which tackles the underground larval stage of common veg pests such as carrot fly, sciarid fly, cabbage root fly, sawflies, onion flies and codling moths.

Nemaslug, is the company's best-seller, a product which works on the slugs that you don't see, those which spend much of the time underground and do serious damage to underground shoots and potatoes.

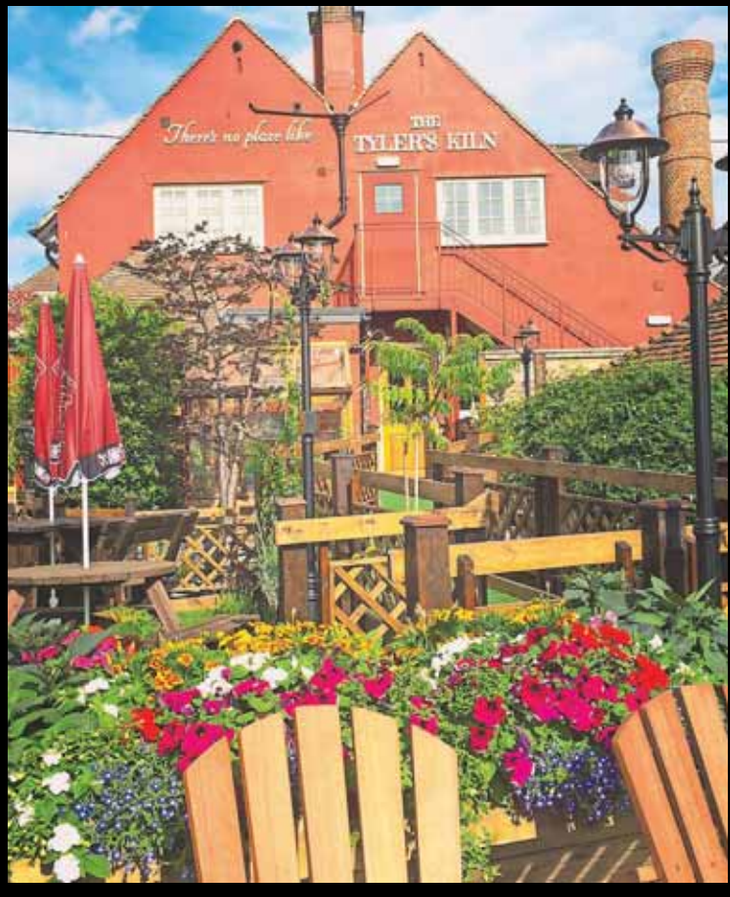
"They each work on the very simple format that the nematodes deliberately seek out their particular prey pests and kill them - simple as that," says BASF's UK sales manager Gavin Wood.

"Treatment can continue throughout the growing season and when the pests have all been wiped out, the level of nematodes in the soil will immediately drop back to the normal concentrations. When temperatures drop at the end of the season, the nematodes will naturally reduce in quantities until the soil warms up again."

Guy Barter, RHS chief horticultural adviser, agrees that nematodes are probably the most eco-friendly solution to pest control.

"They are an excellent idea because they have no effect on non-targeted organisms, are safe for the user and are organic. The only downside is that they are rather expensive," he says.

However, Paul Hetherington, director of fundraising and communications at the charity BugLife, points to research that has shown incidence of certain nematodes crossing species, so would recommend using them only as a last resort.



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Success is 'cool' at Kent College

EVEN on the hottest day of the year it is still cool to be successful at Kent College

Kent College is celebrating another year of excellent GCSE results following this summer's examinations.

The overall pass rate was 100% and almost all students achieved five grades at A*-C. Sixty nine per cent of all grades achieved were A*-B grades.

These statistics follow on from the excellent results at A level and IB already announced.

Students who did particularly well include the following top performers: Harriet Adley, William Bickerstaff, Jamie Dawe, Phoebe Douglas, Sophie Ducksbury, Olivia Earl, Holly Fielder, Rostislav Kravchenko, Marco Lam, William Leatherby, Charlotte Letley, Christopher Leung, Emma Newson, Bethan Okroj-Williams, John Ong and Tara Woodley.

Headmaster Dr David Lamper said: "The pupils have achieved an excellent set of results and so have secured sound foundations for the next stage in their educational career. On top of wonderful A level and IB results, our students can be very proud of their achievements. Congratulations to them and to all of my colleagues for the hard work which makes excellent results like these possible."

EXCELLENCE: Pupils at Canterbury's Kent College celebrate their GCSE exam results, which were described as 'excellent' by head Dr David Lamper

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SCHOOL GUIDE

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

We must move county forward

ANGELA Steven's letter says: "give me Manston Airport every time".

Well, she's got Manston Airport, and all it does is consume column inches and public money.

Still, it could be worse, if it gets listed status, like Margate's Dreamland, it will become mired in a nostalgia-fogged past and then nothing will happen. These areas of Kent need to move forward, they need regeneration and wealth creation, the current stasis fails local people.

John Ward Moorhouse,
Tunbridge Wells

Brexit... what's not to like?

SADLY, Ray Duff will plumb any depths to make himself right, a good old 'flat earther'! [KoS 21/08] He thinks this country just isn't good enough!

Firstly, Churchill actually said, " We have our own dream and our own task. We are with Europe, but not of it, we are linked, but not combined. We are interested and associated, but not absorbed. If Britain must choose between Europe and the open sea, she must always choose the open sea." House of Commons May 11th 1953.

Secondly, what 'austerity'? Does he mean the MPs' 11 per cent rise, the £52 billion for HS2; over 800 Lords on £300/day +expenses; quangocrats on £1/4 million for a 3 day week, while they refuse to stop the £30-40 billion in tax avoidance, don't stop the hundreds of billions in waste in the NHS, MoD, quangos and other NGOs, etc.,etc., while punishing the sick and disabled and our national debt rises to £1.6 trillion? [that's 11 '0's]

Remaining tied to Europe we'd be heading exactly where Greece has ended up, where Spain, Portugal, France and the rest are going, with high youth unemployment, stagnation and crippling debt. Over 2 million coming here to work from the EU, speaks volumes!

After a hiccup caused by Carney, Osborne and Cameron talking down our country, like Ray Duff, Brexit has proved to be the wise course! The world offering 10 times our trade with the EU, small businesses borrowing an unprecedented £20 billion this month, with the 'dead hand' of EU regulation going, economy growing at 0.6 per cent, large companies investing more in GB, etc., etc.! What's not to like? Pity the EU is unable to do the same!

Phil Granger,
West Malling

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Adults should be free to marry for... love

I WAS delighted to read of former Bennett Memorial schoolboy and Olympian race-walker Tom Bosworth's engagement to his long-term boyfriend Harry Dineley in Rio last week.

As an openly-gay Christian and a former Constituency Young Conservative Chairman, I was initially opposed to David Cameron legislating to permit same-sex marriage – believing that marriage should be a lifelong institution for a man and a woman in which to procreate children – and that Cameron's motives had more to do with winning back the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered vote after a majority of Conservative MPs previously voted against reducing the age of consent for homosexual acts and for a ban on local authorities promoting homosexuality as a normal way of life in schools.

However, I have since come to believe it to be both hypocritical and homophobic for fellow Christians to deny gay and lesbian couples the option of marrying one another when, at the same time, sanctioning the marriage of hitherto cohabiting heterosexual couples and heterosexual divorcees, which would appear to suggest that there should be one law for heterosexuals and another for homosexuals. This cannot be right. Consenting adults should be free to marry the person they love, irrespective of their sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

I pray that Tom and Harry will be blessed with good health, much happiness and growing prosperity together for many years to come, and counsel my fellow Christians who oppose same-sex marriage to reconsider their position (as I have), lest they deter LGBT people from attending church and, worse still, portray the Reformed Faith to be homophobic and transphobic which it is not.

Christopher Luke,
Tunbridge Wells

Entering school by 'same gate'

AN alternative to Colin Bullen's letter calling for more grammar schools might be to quote a favourite saying among educationalists that "children should enter school through the same gate".

Although Kent has always favoured grammars, selection was out of fashion after the war years because it was felt to be both discriminatory and made no provision for late developers.

Other countries in developed Europe cope perfectly well with a generally one-tier system. In Germany children go onto the same campus at secondary level but they split for lessons into three separate residences: specialist scholastic (likely to go on to a good university), general intelligence, and technical/vocational. But they mix out of class for other activities.

What this does is to give children early on in life the idea that everyone brings something to the table, and this helps erode class and income inequality. Unlike in Britain where our fractured education system (thank you Michael Gove) continues to reinforce a class system that is a stain on our national reputation.

As far as comprehensives go, there are some very good ones. My three daughters went to a local one and one of them went on to a university degree. I suggest that much of today's problem in the state system revolves around the particular difficulties of inner city schools faced with a multitude of ethnicities and languages, and more generally by the weight of Ofsted-ing, paperwork, assessments and bureaucracy in general which make it difficult for today's teachers to string together half an hour's teaching.

David Redshaw,
Gravesend

Running out of enthusiasm...

RAY Duff gets himself into a right two-and eight; manages to cover a host subjects, all very badly.

I am sure that any election that was re-run immediately after the first result was known would result in a different outcome. As for "legally binding", he's right the EU referendum is not, but I don't rate any politician's chances, nor any government's, that chooses to ignore the outcome.

The PM has stated "Brexit means Brexit", but the detail has to be worked through – not least on this side of the channel: the Remainers were so arrogant in their assumptions of the outcome that no planning was put in place so the planners had to start from scratch - giving Westminster and Whitehall a much-deserved bloody-nose.

Then Mr Duff sets off on a long-winded and diverse range of pet subjects: Grammar schools are not divisive, I benefited, I came from, and still am, working class. They bring out the best by catering for elitism; just like the Olympics, not everyone can do well so we need to cultivate talent and success.

Fracking, how else does he think the country is going to source its energy needs? Private corporations will undertake the task and they should be rewarded for their enterprise, I know of no other system that works properly - nationalisation is a demonstrably flawed model for anything.

I've run out of enthusiasm for this: Mr Duff is the man in the pub who, as soon as you nail him on one argument, immediately sets-to on another.

Ralph Steerpike,
Tunbridge Wells

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1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
3) Be written in clear, concise English.
4) Not be overly sensational.
5) Have a sense of humour.
6) Have an easily understood division between news, comment and advertising.
7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.

We hope you enjoy Kent on Sunday.

images of kent

Lady Orchid's at Yocklett's Bank

by **John Kemp, from Whitstable**

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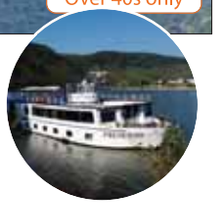

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19 September, 2016 • Quote: AB9-KOS

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INCLUDED: Escorted return rail travel from London St Pancras or Ebbsfleet or return flights with luggage from a choice of UK airports - supp't may apply • 7-night cruise sharing a twin rear cabin on Main Deck - upgrades available • Beer, wine, and soft drinks served at lunch and dinner and from 6pm to midnight at the bar • Morning and afternoon coffee/tea • Buffet breakfasts and lunches • Dinner served at your table - 4 courses • Late night snacks • Captain's dinner - 5 courses • Entertainment • Transfers abroad • Services of our Cruise Director on board

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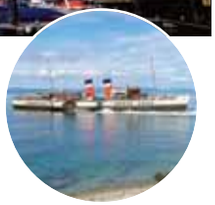


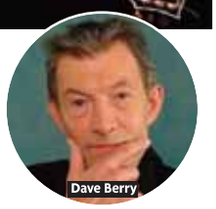
PS Waverley Isle of Wight Cruise & Sparkling Spinnaker Tower

Self-Drive

16 September, 2016 • Quote: WI9-KOS

Join us on the world's last sea-going paddle steamer - The PS Waverley - as she cruises The Solent from Portsmouth to the Isle of Wight. The cruise embarks at Portsmouth's Wightlink Terminal, close to our central Portsmouth hotel, and sails to Yarmouth, Isle of Wight, where you can disembark and explore at your leisure or stay aboard and cruise round the island. The village of Yarmouth has a number of pubs and restaurants to obtain lunch and there are refreshment facilities on board the Waverley. You will also have entry to the Spinnaker Tower where you can enjoy great views of Portsmouth and The Solent with a small bottle of Prosecco.

INCLUDED: 2 nights accommodation at the 3* Royal Maritime Club hotel in central Portsmouth • 2 breakfasts and 2 dinners • PS Waverley cruise Portsmouth to Yarmouth (1 and a half hour cruise each way) or round Isle of Wight and return (approx 7 hours) • Admission to Spinnaker Tower with small bottle of Prosecco



Spring Back to the 60s Party - Pontins Pakefield

Suffolk Coast - Self-Drive

Friday, 10 March, 2017 - Quote: PP3-KOS

Join us at Pontins Pakefield, on the Suffolk coast, for a Spring Party - for over 40s only - to blow away the winter cobwebs. We've lined up entertainment featuring Marty Wilde and the Wildcats, Cupids Inspiration, Glenn Darren and the Krewcats, Dave Berry PLUS The Cilla Show. Enjoy non-stop entertainment from Friday evening to Sunday evening and free drinks every night.

INCLUDED: 3 Free drinks per person per night - house beers & spirits, wine by the glass, pumped soft drinks and mixers • Entertainment • 3 nights en-suite chalet accommodation - club upgrade available • 3 dinners & 3 breakfasts • Free Parking

Seaside 60s Sounds in West Sussex

Chatsworth Hotel, Worthing

24 March, 2017 • Quote: WG3-KOS

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driving

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

HATCHBACK STYLE: the Mazda3

GO AHEAD RED: the Mazda2 special edition for '66 plate buyers

SPORTY SUV: the CX-5

Skyactiv helps to lift Mazda

BRAND UPDATE: Japanese sporting marque shows small is beautiful by developing a highly desirable line-up with driving appeal, style and quality...

MAZDA aims to attract buyers' interest in the new '66 registration plate with the £14,995 Mazda2 Red Edition.

Based on the upmarket 90PS (89bhp) SE-L Nav version, this limited edition comes in either white or black, with red rear spoiler and rear underskirt, plus red highlights inside.

This delivers the supermini hot hatch look to complement the Mazda2's excellent driving and handling, the hallmark of the Japanese brand's entire range and all thanks to Mazda's brilliant Skyactiv technology suite: tuning driver enjoyment, boosting power to weight ratio, and slashing consumption and emissions.

Rather than commit expensive R&D into alternative powertrains such as hybrid and electric – which can always be bought in under licence later – Mazda has simply concentrated on maxing the potential of existing technologies.

It's certainly working in the UK where brand sales soared more than 20 per cent last year and are currently 25 per cent higher this year.

Mazda UK also signalled its confidence in the future by recently moving its Dartford HQ from a shared site to a standalone facility down the road that includes a showroom for the revitalised range, a new heritage collection, and state-of-the-art offices.

SKYACTIV FLAG WAVER: the MX-5

After delivering some superb new high volume models – the mainstream trio of Mazda2, Mazda3 family hatch, and Mazda6 family saloon and estate, plus the excellent Mazda CX-3 and CX-5 sporting SUVs – the icing on the cake was added last year.

This was the marvellous Mk 4 MX-5 sports car (from £18,495) a flag waver for the Skyactiv revolution because it allowed Mazda to recreate the lightness and scale of the legendary Mk 1 MX-5, retaining the front engine/rear-driven balance, while incorporating the best tech and safety now demanded by consumers and legislation.

Significantly though, Mazda no longer needs to rely on the MX-5 to deliver headlines.

» Read more of Steve's motoring reviews in...
KENT LIFE

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Viva the Corsa evolution at Vauxhall

Vauxhall's five-door supermini is a smart, honest and valid re-working of its big-selling predecessor, plus a superb engine line-up writes **Steve Loader...**

Vauxhall Corsa SRi 1.0T (90PS) 5-dr

Price:	from £14,585
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★★
Space:	★★★★★
Value:	★★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Ford Fiesta

CARMAKERS normally invite derision by passing off a facelift as an all-new model.

In the case of the latest Corsa (from £9,745) five-door supermini though, Vauxhall can be excused: firstly, the brand has never hid the fact that the fifth generation car is an 'evolution' of its predecessor even though most body panels are new.

Secondly, there was a strong case for 'not fixing it, if it ain't broke' as, even in its twilight years, the previous car still sold strongly thanks to funky styling, good interior space, and decent driving dynamics.

Indeed, the racy three-door Corsa variant continues in the old shape for now, while the new five-door carried over the above plus points when launched in 2014, while adding some acclaimed styling cues from the bigger Astra hatchback and Insignia family model.

The chassis was also tuned to UK roads – officially some of the worst in Europe – because this country happens to be the Corsa's biggest market.

Where the car did need help was in the engine compartment, and that's clearly where the big money has been spent. The undoubted star here is a three-cylinder 1.0-litre turbo-charged petrol engine and six-speed gearbox in 90PS (89bhp) or 115PS (114bhp) tune with fuel and emissions saving Start/Stop technology.

'Three-pot' units are a Holy Grail for manufacturers, being cheap to build, lighter and more compact, and delivering many operating efficiencies.

Unfortunately, they can also be noisy so-and-sos, because of the inherent imbalance of an odd number of cylinders – I previously described one such engine as sounding like angry pheasants caged under the bonnet.

No such 'fowl-up' with the Corsa though; the engineers have done a wonderful job of smoothing the eccentricities of three pistons driving the crankshaft, to create an engine that is surprisingly refined, lively and economical.

Added to that is a fun element that makes this unit attractive to cash-strapped younger buyers, whether installed in the Corsa itself, or its posh handbag/manbag class MINI-rivalling Adam sister model.

This entertainment comes in the form of light but responsive steering, and a crisp gearchange well able to make use of a thick band of power from low down the rev range; this is a little car you can press on with if necessary, well-suited to urban cut and thrust traffic too, while also cruising nicely on the motorway.

Other engine options include a 1.4-litre four-cylinder with or without turbocharging, 1.6-litre turbo for the three-door VXR 'pocket rocket' and 1.3-litre diesel, though the last does make the Corsa feel relatively cumbersome.

The Corsa's roomy cabin shows a much needed upweight from the previous car, with many soft-touch materials, underlining Vauxhall's bid to move above the mainstream market.

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO2 emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range: Urban: 12.7 (22.3) – 83.1 (3.4) Extra-urban: 23.3 (12.1) - 94.2 (3.0). Combined: 17.9 (15.8) – 91.1 (3.1). CO2 emissions: 373 - 82g/km. Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

^Usually payable in addition to the first monthly payment. ‡Usually payable in addition to the final monthly payment. *Option 1 – Pay final payments & keep the car. Option 2 – return the car. Option 3 – Trade in against a new vehicle. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantee or Indemnity may be required. Finance supplied by either Vauxhall Motor Finance RH11 5R or Vauxhall Finance, PO Box 6666, Cardiff, CF15 7YT. Offer applies to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only excluding B2B). All other customers are excluded. Offers available on vehicles registered between 4th July and 30th September 2016. #£2,500 Minimum Part Exchange includes Vauxhall Partners Allowance, £2,500 towards a new car is offered on condition that the traded-in car must have been registered in your name as the owner and have a current MOT for a least 90 days. Offers available to private individuals and small businesses 1-24 units (purchase only). All other sales categories are excluded. Offers apply to selected new vehicles ordered and registered between 4th July 2016 and 30th September 2016, and are subject to terms and conditions. UK-supplied vehicles only. Offer only available on selected models. Vehicles are shown for illustration purposes only. These offers supersede all previously advertised offers. Prices correct at time of going to press. Offers are subject to availability. Licensed credit brokers, written details available on request, finance is subject to status. E&OE. 16256

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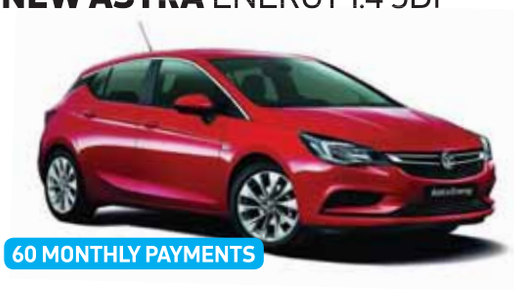

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PX Welcome

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new reg 66

By Steve Loader
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A buyer's guide....

JUST ADD FUEL: Peugeot PCP deal makes the 208 a popular choice

SECTOR PIONEER: Nissan's Qashqai launched the crossover craze

FLAGSHIP SUV APPEAL: Grand Cherokee is the top Jeep

New Reg clicks with 'Plate '66'

By Steve Loader

BINGO callers like to call 66 as "clickety click", and something will definitely click when the car registration plate changes to '66 on September 1.

Because 'Plate 66' arrives to find the UK new car market in surprisingly good health despite dire predictions about the EU referendum depressing consumer confidence, before and after the momentous Brexit vote.

There is also an ever growing variety of car types to buy, driven by changing tastes: people carriers or MPVs, for instance, are in decline yet off-roader styled SUVs and versatile crossovers are booming.

And British drivers' taste for small cars is rock solid – no doubt helped by PCP (personal contract purchase) schemes in which buyers know exactly how much they need to find each month to drive the latest model.

Indeed, Peugeot's Just Add Fuel spells it out: everything is included in the deal – tax (where applicable) insurance, servicing and the car itself - so you just add fuel every month.

There is also a wider choice of powertrains: electric and hybrid is increasingly popular, while petrol – helped by light compact low emission units – is making a comeback, particularly in smaller models where heavier diesel engines can be hard on tyres and mechanicals.

The UK car market actually grew by a steady 3.2 per cent in the first six months of the year, according to figures released by motor industry mouthpiece, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) and the 1,420,636 new registrations was the best half-year performance ever recorded.

However, demand in June eased slightly, with a -0.8 per cent fall in registrations, meeting expectations that market growth would stabilise following a record 2015.

SMMT chief executive Mike Hawes said: "It is far too soon to determine whether the referendum result has had an impact on the new car market. The first six months saw strong demand at record levels but the market undoubtedly cooled over the second quarter."

■ **Check out the rest of our supplement for buying your new '66 plate' car**

CZECH CLASS: latest Superb ridicules those tired old Skoda jokes

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*Vehicles must be ordered and registered by 30 September 2016. Subject to availability. Colours and specifications may vary. Stock vehicles only. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Retail customers only. Offer may be varied or withdrawn at any time.

Official fuel consumption for the ŠKODA range in mpg (litres/100km): Urban 31.4 (9.0) to 72.4 (3.9); Extra Urban 45.6 (6.2) to 91.1 (3.1); Combined 39.2 (7.2) to 83.1 (3.4). CO_2 emissions for the ŠKODA range are 164 to 88g/km. Standard EU test figures are for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results.

Join the space race with a supermini...

DOWNSIZING your car is trendy – is it just common sense?

Soaring fuel and insurance costs, greater environmental awareness, and punitive road tax on larger cars, have all played their part in turning us away from the typical family car, and turning us on to family hatchbacks first, and now super-minis.

And we find them not so 'mini' after all as manufacturers become ever more imaginative in cabin design. So superminis, and even smaller city cars, now account for around 40 per cent of new car sales, followed by family hatchbacks with around 25 per cent of registrations.

Even the commonality of the two-box supermini shape – dictated by the need for compact on-road dimensions – can be addressed by ever more imaginative customisation.

This might be a roof of a different colour, pattern or decal such as a flag, or it could be special wheels, bespoke door mirrors, or a wild paint job.

In short, superminis might have similar proportions, but they don't have to look alike.

They can also be fun: the short overhangs/wheel-at-each corner look lends itself to a well sorted chassis and handling so that, just like the original 1960s Mini, these small hatchbacks can handle windy roads.

With small yet powerful engines they often have the revs to match too, though sensible use of the throttle also brings good economy.

CHEEKY CINQUECENTO: FIAT 500

MG REVIVED: the MG3 is the modern-day MG entry model

SPORTING STYLE: Alfa Romeo MiTo

FRENCH CHIC: Renault Clio

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PEUGEOT RECOMMENDS TOTAL Official Fuel Consumption in MPG (l/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km) for the New 2008 SUV Range are: Urban 47.1 – 65.7 (6.0 – 4.3), Extra Urban 65.7 – 85.6 (4.3 – 3.3), Combined 57.6 – 76.3 (4.9 – 3.7) and CO_2 114 – 96 (g/km).

MPG figures are achieved under official EU test conditions, intended as a guide for comparative purposes only and may not reflect actual on-the-road driving conditions. Model shown is a New 2008 SUV Allure 1.2L PureTech 110 S&S, with Ultimate Red Varnish from £18,360 OTR. On The Road price includes delivery to the Dealership, number plates, 12 months' Government Vehicle Excise Duty and £55 Government First Registration Fee Specification featured in advertisement is model dependent. For full specification and pricing details visit peugeot.co.uk or contact your local Peugeot Dealer. Information correct at time of going to press.

Cars for all reasons and seasons

THERE'S no doubt that the motoring flavour of the month is the off-roader look.

Not that it has to be partnered with size and four-wheel drive anymore, because the style has been civilized in recent years by the SUV (sports utility vehicle) and the crossover.

As the name implies, the latter is a crowd pleaser that is part family hatchback, part people carrier/MPV, and usually with a high-riding SUV stance.

SUVs have revived too as buyers look for a little more off-road and 4x4 performance.

But whether crossover or SUV, these cars are the Swiss Army Knives of the car market, able to cope with the needs of most owners who require more space than the ubiquitous supermini and city car can offer.

Of course, like most cars these days, they can also be personalized and customized, while the option of 4x4 on most models means that they can do some simple off-roading or deliver decent traction in awkward situations, without the real overheads of a full 4x4 off-roader.

A few, such as Peugeot's clever 2008, also offer a heavy duty traction control system on their front driving wheels, delivering the 4x4 experience at a bargain price.

Meanwhile, the cabins have been given the full MPV treatment, often with clever rear seats that fold and slide and in various combinations – you can even have seven seats on some models.

And the high stance – so good for visibility and easy access – doesn't have to come at the price of roly-poly cornering; most designs now handle as well as lower slung models.

VERSATILITY: the SUV/Crossover is the Swiss Army Knife of the motor market. Cars like the new MG GS, Jeep's Renegade entry model, and Kia's best seller, the Sportage

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Representative Example

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The MPG figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results. They are provided for comparability purposes, and may not reflect actual driving experience. IS 300h SPORT fuel consumption and CO2 figures: urban 60.1 mpg (4.7 l/100km), extra-urban 58.9 mpg (4.8 l/100km), combined 61.4 mpg (4.6 l/100km), 107g/km CO2 (18% BIK). NX 300h F SPORT fuel consumption and CO2 figures: urban 53.3 mpg (5.3 l/100km), extra-urban 55.4 mpg (5.1 l/100km), combined 54.3 mpg (5.2 l/100km), 121g/km CO2 (21% BIK)mpg (5.2 l/100km), 121g/km CO2 (21% BIK)

NX 300h prices start from £29,995. Model shown is NX 300h F SPORT £38,140, including optional metallic paint at £645. *5.9% APR Representative, £1,500 Finance Deposit Allowance and £500 Centre contribution 24-42 months only on Lexus Connect (PCP), up to 35% deposit and Guaranteed Future Value/Optional Final Payment. NX new retail sales. Ordered and proposed for finance between 1 July 2016 and 30 September 2016, registered and financed by 31 December 2016 through Lexus Financial Services. IS 300h prices start from £29,995. Model shown is IS 300h Sport £30,605, including option metallic paint at £610. *0% APR Representative 24 months only on Lexus Connect (PCP), up to 35% deposit and Guaranteed Future Value/Optional Final Payment. IS new retail sales. Ordered and proposed for finance between 1 July 2016 and 30 September 2016, registered and financed by 31 December 2016 through Lexus Financial Services. ^Payment shown is based on a 24 month Lexus Connect contract with £7,599.25 customer deposit and guaranteed future value/optional final payment. Participating Lexus Centres. Other finance offers available but cannot be used in conjunction with this offer. Terms and conditions apply. 8,000 miles per annum, excess mileage charge applies over contracted miles, 9 pence per mile. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status, over 18s. Lexus Centres are independent of Lexus Financial Services. Lexus Financial Services is a trading name of Toyota Financial Services (UK) PLC. Registered Office: Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, KT18 5UZ. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the cars shown are: urban 39.2 (7.2)–47.1 (6); extra-urban 60.1 (4.7)–62.8 (4.5); combined 51.4 (5.5)–55.4 (5.1). The official CO_2 emissions are 127–114g/km. EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008 test environment figures. Fuel consumption and CO_2 may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors.
Offer for £500 off is available to retail customers only. Offer can be used in conjunction with other offers and is available on the Clio (excludes New Clio), Captur, All-New KADJAR and All-New Mégane models when ordered between 22 August 2016 and 26 September 2016 and registered before 30 September 2016.

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On the other hand...

AS you will have read earlier, SUVS, crossovers and superminis dominate car buyers' thoughts nowadays.

But not everyone can cram into a small car or wants a high-riding 'fun bus', so the family hatchback remains a popular option – such as two newcomers to the sector, the Fiat Tipo and latest Renault Megane, both available as a hatch or sporty estate.

These cars tend to be cheap to run and the lift up tailgate or 'hatch' makes them clever load carriers – two levers is often all it takes to convert them to a small van – and they usually handle well too.

Of course, the saloon remains popular with those who want to project a classier image – particularly with the premium brands.

But the biggest market news apart from the rise of the crossover, has been the resurgence of the estate car: once regarded as a tradesman or sales rep's favourite, the estate is seen increasingly as a lifestyle choice, suggesting that you have a country retreat and enjoy an active timetable.

Indeed, so popular have they become that many estate models outsell their saloon or hatchback counterparts.

If you are shopping for an estate though and really do need the room, check the vital statistics of boot space and overall load area, they can vary widely and some family hatchback based estates do outgun estate models from the class above.

GREAT ALTERNATIVES: Alfa Romeo's lovely new Giulia is a premium saloon option, but cars with hatchback and estate options are big business, such as the established Skoda Octavia and a new duo, the FIAT Tipo and Renault Megane

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Fiat 500 POP 1.2	
On the Road Price	£11,400
Fiat Deposit Contribution	£1,000
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Monthly Payment	£129
Optional Final Payment (incl. £10 fee)	£3,685
Total Amount Payable by Customer	£11,598
Duration of Contract	48 months
Rate of Interest (Fixed)	4.91%
	Representative 5.0% APR

Representative example

NEW 500

FIAT

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Fuel consumption figures for new Fiat 500 range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 51.4 (5.5) – 68.9 (4.1); Extra Urban 65.7 (4.3) – 94.2 (3.0); Combined 60.1 (4.7) – 83.1 (3.4). CO_2 emissions 110 – 88 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures based on standard EU tests for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Promotion available on new Fiat 500 Pop 1.2 Series 4 models registered between 1st August and 30th September 2016. Model shown includes Countrypolitan Yellow Special Pastel Paint at £350. Fiat Deposit Contribution only available in conjunction with Fiat i-Deal PCP. With Fiat i-Deal you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating dealers only. Fiat Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors including Fiat Financial Services.

16546

'Eco' has a double meaning

BUYERS may have eco-logy in mind when buying their next car, but it's probably a long way behind eco-nomy.

They will be looking for the real savings on fuel and tax behind any 'eco' car's sales pitch – at least until the Government's new road tax scheme applies in 2017.

For now tax bandings range from zero for cars with the lowest CO2 emissions (band A - below 100g/km) right up to £505.

Even more crucially, you don't pay anything for low CO2 emitting cars in bands B-D for the first year, but the tax soars higher up the scale.

Anyone spending £50,000-100,000 on a car probably won't fret, but most people want to save fuel and tax, while also doing their bit for the environment.

Longer term, electric cars may be the answer, but the latest trend is towards plug-in hybrids.

Better than a standard hybrid, these allow you to charge the batteries overnight or at the office during the day, so upfront travel costs are kept low.

There are also conventional 'eco' cars, but these are not always cheap, so shop around and note that if you don't cover enough miles to make fuel savings offset the car's purchase price, conventional alternatives may be a better bet.

Don't ignore petrol models either; concerns about harmful NOX (oxides of nitrogen) emissions from diesels, plus the higher price of the engines upfront should be compared with lively new turbo-charged small capacity petrol engines with low emissions and consumption.

It's clear the market is heeding concerns about NOX and the increasing efficiency of petrol: last year's record registration figures showed petrol enjoying greater growth (8.4 per cent versus 3 per cent) while equal market shares indicated that diesel's superiority was waning for the first time in decades.

GREENING IT: the economic advantages of small cars such as the Kia Rio are obvious, and hybrids like the classy Lexus NX300h offer big tax savings for company car drivers, but electric cars like the Renault Zoe could be the future

Fuel consumption: URBAN 36.6 - 37.6 mpg | 7.7 - 7.5 l/100km, EXTRA URBAN 53.2 mpg | 5.3 l/100km, COMBINED 45.5 - 46.3 mpg | 6.2 - 6.1 l/100km, CO2 EMISSIONS 139 - 141 g/km

Model shown is MG GS Exclusive with Sunset Orange paint and black A-post decal at £19,989. *On the road price of £14,995 applies to the MG GS Explore with no optional extras. On the road (OTR) prices include VAT where applicable, vehicle first registration fee, delivery, number plates and 12 months' 'Vehicle Excise Duty'. From prices exclude optional metallic paint, accessories and graphics packs. Fuel consumption values shown are based on official EU test figures and are to be used as a guide for comparative purposes and may not be representative of actual driving results.

† Conditional Sale. 0% APR available on all MG GS models until 30 September 2016. A minimum deposit of 20% of the cash OTR price applies. Finance by MG Financial Services, a trading style of GMAC UK plc, PO Box 6666, Cardiff CF15 7YT. Finance subject to status. Availability and terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be aged 18 or over. Offer available at participating dealers. Please see your local dealer or visit www.mg.co.uk/offers for details.

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La meccanica delle emozioni

Models shown are Alfa MiTo 875cc TB TwinAir 105 hp Progression including Alfa Red Special Paint at £475, OTR £14,535 & Alfa Giulietta 1.4 TB 120 hp at £19,225 OTR incl. Stromboli Grey Special Paint at £525. Range of official fuel consumption figures for the Alfa MiTo Progression & Alfa Giulietta range: Urban 29.7 – 64.2 mpg (9.5 – 4.4 l/100km); Extra Urban 54.3 – 97.4 mpg (5.2 – 2.9 l/100km); Combined 41.5 – 80.7 mpg (6.8 – 3.5 l/100km). CO_2 emissions 157 – 90 g/km. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. *Customer deposit is £999. Optional Final Payment is £3,813. Contract Term is 48 months. Promotion available on Alfa MiTo 875cc TB TwinAir 105 hp Progression including Alfa Red Special Paint at £475 between 1st August and 30th September 2016. ^Customer deposit is £1,549. Optional Final Payment is £5,823. Contract Term is 48 months. Promotion available on Alfa Giulietta 1.4 TB 120 hp at £19,225 OTR registered between 1st August and 30th September 2016. Alfa Deposit Contribution only available in conjunction with Alfa Romeo Preferenza PCP. With Alfa Romeo Preferenza you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in these examples) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating Dealers only. We work with a number of creditors including Alfa Romeo Financial Services. Alfa Romeo Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW.

16519

AGE, TAKE A HIKE

Legends don't come much younger than the Jeep Renegade. But whilst Jeep are celebrating 75 years of 4x4 glory, the Renegade climbed its way to the top fast. Crowned 4x4 of the year 2016 by 4x4 magazine. Available with bronze styling and a choice of four colours including Jungle Green, the 75th anniversary edition also features My Sky® open air roof, touchscreen infotainment & navigation system and over 60 safety features. Forget the cake, let's hit the road.

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Model shown is the Jeep Renegade 2.0 MultiJet II 140hp 4WD 75th Anniversary (Incl £700 Special Paint) at OTR £27,495. OFFICIAL FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES FOR JEEP RENEGADE RANGE MPG (L/100KM): EXTRA URBAN 47.9 (5.9) – 70.6 (4.0), URBAN 32.5 (8.7) – 55.4 (5.1), COMBINED 40.9 (6.9) – 64.2 (4.4), CO_2 EMISSIONS: 160 – 115 G/KM. Fuel consumption and CO_2 figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. *Customer deposit is £8,499. Jeep deposit is £2,000. Total deposit is £10,499. Optional Final Payment is £12,971. Contract Term is 24 months. Promotion available on new Renegade 75th Anniversary editions registered between 1st August and 30th September 2016. Jeep Deposit Contribution only available in conjunction with Jeep Horizon PCP. With Jeep Horizon you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 10,000 miles per annum in this example) and being in good condition. Finance subject to status. Guarantees may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. At participating Dealers only. Jeep Financial Services, PO BOX 4465, Slough, SL1 0RW. We work with a number of creditors including Jeep Financial Services. Jeep® is a registered trademark of FCA US LLC.

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Put your bum on the seat first

CAR buyers' attitudes to booking a test drive range from obsession to indifference, but it is worthwhile before signing paperwork.

So:

Book early - New Reg is a busy time for dealers, so map out a test schedule, driving each candidate soon after another for more accurate comparisons. It helps that many dealers are grouped at 'motor city' sites like Broad Oak at Canterbury, Ashford's Orbital Park and Dowding Way, Tunbridge Wells, allowing easy shuttling from one dealer to the next.

Don't be hurried - insist on time to test the car in town traffic, on the motorway or a high speed road and on less well-maintained rural roads.

What are you looking for? Experience of different road surfaces, highlighting seating and ride comfort issues, plus engine, wind, tyre and mechanical noise. And especially...

PUT THEM TO THE TEST: the premium Lexus IS, capacious little Skoda Fabia Estate, classy Peugeot 308 SW (estate)

Do you like the controls? It used to be easy to find your way around dashboards, but most carmakers are now going their own way in search of the best human interaction, but they actually don't suit everyone. Touchscreens for sounds and sat nav and electronic handbrakes are just two possible bugbears.

Is it the right spec? Try to get a test car as close to the one you are interested in, even if you have to wait a few days extra or go to another dealership.

Make it a family outing - it can be a painful process of 'are we there yet?' proportions, but try to involve as many of the would-be car users - drivers and non-drivers. This can answer questions about comfort and visibility in the rear and, specifically, is there really room for three across the back seat, especially if one place has to take a strap-in child seat or booster? Also, can you lift shopping in and out of the boot easily or indeed, is there much of a boot?

Don't feel pressured - whether you have one or several candidates to check out. Always go away and weigh your thoughts; maybe leave the salesman with a reason to be cheerful by asking whether it would be OK to come back later for another test drive. If the reaction is not good then you've learned something there too!

Canterbury Kia Vauxhall Road, Canterbury, CT1 1QY **01227 208920** www.canterbury-kia.co.uk

Harbour Garage Tower Parade, Whitstable, CT5 2BJ **01227 200029** www.harbourgarage.com

Fuel consumption in mpg (l/100km) for the Kia range shown: Urban 29.1 (9.7) – 68.9 (4.1), Extra Urban 47.9 (5.9) – 85.6 (3.3), Combined 38.2 (7.4) – 78.5 (3.6), CO_2 170 – 94g/km. MPG figures are official EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Models shown: Picanto 'Sport' 1.25 84bhp 5-speed manual ISG 5-door at £11,995 including Clear White paint. Kia Picanto range available from £8,545. Rio 'SE' 1.25 84bhp 5-speed manual ISG 5-door at £12,995 including Clear White paint. Kia Rio range available from £10,945. New cee'd GT-Line 1.0 T-GDi 118bhp 6-speed manual ISG at £20,220 including Track Red paint. Kia cee'd range available from £14,905. Customer savings vary by model derivative. Specification shown not available on all models, specification varies across the range and is subject to change without notice. Available between 01.07.16 – 30.09.16 inclusive. £1,000 including VAT saving available for the purchase of a new Kia between 01.07.16 – 30.09.16 (excl. Picanto 1, 2, SR7, Chilli, 3 and 4 grades 3 & 5-door, Rio 1, SR7 and 2 grades 3 & 5-door, All-New Sportage). Offer subject to taking a test drive. Private customer registrations only, excluding Personal Contract Hire. Subject to status. T&Cs apply. 18s or over. Guarantee may be required. Kia Finance RH1 1SR. Specification is subject to change without notice. Offers not available with any other offer. Offers not available in the Isle of Man or Channel Islands. Retail sales only. 7 year / 100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty. For full terms and exclusions visit www.kia.co.uk.

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Contact Details

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461 - Email swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk

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Boss delighted by cup trip to Spurs

Justin Edinburgh returns to White Hart Lane with the Gills

Football

By Tom Pyman
tom.pyman@archant.co.uk

GILLINGHAM have received a glamour draw in the third round of the EFL Cup after being paired with Premier League giants Tottenham Hotspur.

Boss Justin Edinburgh won the then League Cup with Spurs in his playing days, and will be relishing a return to White Hart Lane next month for only the second meeting between the two clubs.

The north London outfit won the only fixture to date, also in the League Cup, 4-2 at Priestfield in November 1982.

It comes after Edinburgh's side sprung a surprise in the last round, beating Watford 2-1 at Vicarage Road after extra time, courtesy of goals from Mark Byrne and Bradley Dack after Odion Ighalo had put the top flight side ahead just before the hour mark.

The Gills last reached this stage of the competition in 2005, and victory against Spurs will see them progress to the fourth round for the first time since 1996, when they lost at Ipswich Town having beaten then-Premier League side Coventry City in a replay at Highfield Road.

Edinburgh said: "I'm delighted for the club and the players; it's a great reward for a fantastic performance at Watford.

"I'm sure this game will be even better for everybody involved with the club, from the chairman to the staff, the players and the fans, because of the size, stature and history of Tottenham.

PROUD: Gillingham boss Justin Edinburgh

"There was a bit of celebrating in the Edinburgh house when the draw was made, that's for sure.

"On a personal note, taking a club to White Hart Lane is something that I've wanted to do since I went into management.

"A lot of hard work has gone in to getting there, and when the evening arrives [an unspecified date on the week commencing September 19], I'm sure it'll be a fantastic occasion.

"As a young manager, I've worked my way through the leagues, and you want to cause upsets when you get the opportunity."

Student aims to inspire from sidelines in Rio

Basketball

A STUDENT from Maidstone says he will be looking to use skills learnt at university to inspire Team GB to glory at the Paralympic Games in Rio.

John Francis, 25, is studying sports science at the University of Worcester and will be in Brazil to assist the British wheelchair basketball team, using his expertise in performance analysis.

Francis began his PhD Studentship in the Institute of Sport and Exercise Science in April 2014 after completing a Master's degree in Sports Coaching at the same university.

His research involves close work with the British wheelchair basketball squads, which train at the University of Worcester Arena, and focuses on performance analysis.

RIO: John Francis (second left)

The former Maidstone Grammar School pupil, who moved to Worcester in 2009, said: "It is a great honour and privilege to be given the chance to transfer the skills I have learnt as a student as well as the research findings from my PhD into practice on the world's largest sporting stage.

"I hope my involvement with both the men's and women's British wheelchair basketball performance squads during the Rio Paralympic cycle has had a beneficial and contributing impact towards their continual medal achievements at the European Championships.

"It is now time to transfer these skills to the world stage, unlocking opponents' patterns and styles of play in order to find the marginal gains that will help the teams achieve their true playing potential."

Sport Shorts

» Email **sports@kosmedia.co.uk** or call **Tom Pyman** on **01233653477**

Promising batsman to extend stay at county

SEAN Dickson has pledged his long-term future to Kent by signing a contract extension at the club.

The batsman, 24, achieved his career best score this season – 207 not out in the County Championship win at Derbyshire – and he averages 49.75 this season in red-ball cricket.

The right-hander earned his first professional contract after impressing in the second XI last summer.

He said: "I've really enjoyed my time at Kent so far and I had no hesitation in extending my contract here.

"The club gave me a great opportunity and I'd like to think there's more to come from me.

"There's a good bunch of guys in the dressing room and I'm confident we can win trophies together."

Head coach Jimmy Adams added: "Sean has settled into the squad nicely and if he continues to progress, I am sure it won't be long before he becomes an established player for Kent."

DEAL: Sean Dickson

HEROES: Team GB land at Heathrow

Olympic stars touch down to great fanfare

KENT'S triumphant Olympians touched down on British soil to great fanfare this week following the most successful Games in more than a century.

Orpington sprinter Dina Asher-Smith, part of the women's 4x100m relay bronze medal-winning quartet, said she hoped her success would inspire young people, while Chatham trampolinist Kat Driscoll told reporters: "It's been incredible, they played the national anthem before we left – a really nice way to end it."

Sports minister and Chatham and Aylesford MP Tracey Crouch added: "The Herculean efforts of those performing in Rio, including local athletes from Kent and Medway, has made us all so proud and I'm sure will go on to inspire future generations."

World Cup hero to open facility

ONE of the shining lights of England's historic World Cup winning team in 1966 will help open a new sports changing pavilion in Tunbridge Wells next month.

Former right-back George Cohen and local MP and business secretary Greg Clark will open Langton Green CSA's new £500,000 state-of-the-art facility next Saturday (September 3).

The facility, made possible with a £384,500 grant from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund, comprises two team changing rooms, two officials' changing rooms, a clubroom, kitchen facilities, storage equipment and spectator toilets.

Cohen led the Tonbridge Angels to Kent Senior Cup glory as manager during the 1974-75 season and currently lives in Tunbridge Wells.

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